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Schooling and the Dalits of Nepal: A Case Study of Bungkot *Dalit* Community

BY

BIDYA NATH KOIRALA

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This undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and research for acceptance, a thesis entitled SCHOOLING AND THE DALITS OF NEPAL: A CASE STUDY OF BUNGKOT *DALIT* COMMUNITY submitted by Bidya Nath Koirala in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in International/Intercultural Education.

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Dedication

To my late father Sadha Prasad Koirala
who always encouraged me for further study

&

To my mother Prem Kumari Koirala
who always gave me her filial affection

Abstract

This study explores the relationships between a lower caste group and schools in Nepal, the way that relationship is influenced or shaped by the caste system, and the way both the caste group and others understand and explain the relationship. Popularly known as *Dalits* these people had no access to schooling for centuries, because schooling was a perogative of high caste people and *Dalits* were regarded not only as low caste but untouchable people. The dawn of democracy in the country in 1950 and the rapid expansion of western type schooling in the following years provided schooling opportunities for all including *Dalits*, although there remained a social taboo against them.

Following discussion of social structure and caste, the study turns to the development of education in Nepal and data on schooling in Bungkot, the village which was the primary research site. Available data on educational change and development in Nepal was collected, and a thorough review of the Hindu understanding of caste was done. Information was then gathered from the Bungkote *Dalit* community of Gorkha district of Nepal in the fall of 1994 using participant observation, group interviews and discussion, life history collection, individual interviews, and a community survey. The information was analyzed thematically and interpreted critically, drawing on a social science literature on social inequality and education, including the relationship of schooling to social development and change.

The thematic analysis identified four main areas which Dalits addressed when they discussed schooling; its relationship to caste culture, its relationship to employment and indirectly social class, adults and children's experiences with school, and schools relationship to social change. It is apparent that as schooling began to expand in Nepal among *Dalits*, it worked on two fronts, providing a means for people to challenge caste beliefs and providing them with a means to change their occupational status. At the same time, along with political and other changes, it resulted in some higher caste people developing a liberal attitude towards *Dalits*. The *Dalits* with schooling are ensured social mobility, identify avenues to economic betterment, develop socio-political awareness, begin to question untouchability, and encourage their children to attend school. Schooling was also found to be important in enabling *Dalits* to understand their situation, to question the status quo, and to know the world outside their village. In this respect this study found schooling to have much more positive effects among these *Dalit* castes in Bungkot than much of the critical literature would suggest. Nevertheless, there are many unresolved issues around caste, class, inequality and education, empirical and theoretical issues which could not be answered by this study .

Finally this study also found that many *Dalits* do not benefit from schooling, and the current school system requires certain readjustments in order to be very useful for the *Dalits* of Nepal.

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Chapter I
Introduction

Background

In Nepal, forty percent of school-going age children have never been to school, seventy percent of the schooled children drop-out before completing the primary school cycle (I-V), sixty to seventy percent of class (grade) ten graduates cannot pass the School Leaving Certificate Examination (a nation-wide test at the end of grade X which was the final year of secondary school until 1994), and about sixty six percent of students who pass the School Leaving Certificate Examination (SLC) cannot go on to higher education.

Despite these problems there are schools in these days in every village/town development committee with an average of 155 students in each primary school, and 109 students in each secondary school (VI- X). This widespread extension of schooling, and of a particular form of schooling, into the lives of the people of Nepal has occurred rapidly; for example the country has gone from just over 300 primary schools in 1951 to over 10,000 in 1981 and more than 18,000 in 1991. And it has taken place in a context in which inequality, especially among different castes, has been a major feature of the social landscape.

"Even the five fingers of a hand are not equal; how can an individual be equal to others?" With these words does a Nepali legitimize social inequality by drawing upon a folk formula to explain it. Contrary to this legitimization of inequality, he or she also argues that to the God all human beings are equal. Thus is expressed the lived tension of being socially equal or unequal, a tension which is manifested in many different forms. A Nepali's religious and cultural values, that some are born high caste and some low caste, and socio-economic values that some are born with a silver spoon in their mouth and others with a hand to mouth problem for minimal sustenance, maintains and reproduces the tension of being equal or being unequal. The caste system in Nepal was conceived and nurtured by religious and cultural values, and in most cases a class system is blended with the caste hierarchy. In both the advantaged and disadvantaged caste, there is a word Karma (action or fate) to legitimize this inequality. The affluent high caste use the word Karma implying good actions of previous births is a source of their affluence, while for the poorer low castes the same word Karma now implying socially and religiously unacceptable actions translates into fate echoing poverty, negativity, passivity, and eventually untouchability.

Of the 20 million people in Nepal, there are 60 ethnic/caste groups. Similarly there are 19 ethnic language groups of which 13 belong to the Tibeto-Burman and the rest to the Indo-Aryan language family. Almost every ethnic group has a caste system of its own, and

every caste a sub-caste system, with castes having higher or lower relationships to one another and with the 'lowest' castes being the 'untouchable' ones. Interestingly, there is again a caste system in all language speaking groups, but all language groups and ethnic groups do not have an untouchable caste. However an untouchable caste to one ethnic or language group is considered untouchable for all caste/ethnic and language groups of Nepal. Nepali, a language of the Indo-Aryan family and the official language of the country, is the mother tongue of 58% of the people and spoken as a second language by the majority of those who speak some other mother tongue.

Almost all of the caste people live geographically and socially within their own community; that is, they get married, develop kinship relations, and maintain other socio-cultural relations within the 'ghettos' of their own caste groups. Ideally, each caste group is interdependent with others but practically some are more dependent on others for their living. In particular, the people of the untouchable castes whom Ogbu (1978) would refer to as caste or involuntary minorities are more dependent on other caste people.

The present study focuses on education among the group of people in Nepal who for centuries have been treated as *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Jat* (an 'untouchable caste', people whom others cannot touch nor can they take food from them) and uses the term *Dalit*[1] to refer to them. *Dalit* is derived from Sanskrit nomenclature and is used by the politicians and social scientists of Nepal to identify or categorize a group of people who are religiously, culturally, socially, and economically oppressed. In this category there are people of different language and ethnic backgrounds but my focus is limited to three Nepali speaking *Dalit* caste groups, Damai, Kami, and Sarki. Traditionally, a Damai is a tailor caste and musician, a Kami is a blacksmith, and a Sarki is a cobbler. Of the *Dalits* in Nepal the caste groups of interest to this study constitute a little less than half the total. The Damai make up 1.99%, the Kami 5.21%, and the Sarki 1.49% of the countries population for a total of 8.7% of the 20% *Dalits* (Nepal: National Planning Commission Secretariat, 1993). All three are Hindu by birth and some live in almost all the villages of Nepal.

These castes and their experience with schooling is particularly interesting because unlike *Dalits* from other ethnic/language groups, they have neither a language of their own nor a

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[1]*Dalit* is a 20th century translation of the phrase scheduled caste. This phrase was coined by the Simon Commission (1927) in India and the British government there used the term scheduled caste for the first time in 1935. Literaliy, the word scheduled caste or *Dalit* means people who are socially and culturally depressed, and deprived of different developmental opportunities including education. *Harijan* (children of God) is a synonym for the word *Dalit*. The word *Harijan* was coined by Mahatma Gandhi in India in order to let so-called 'untouchable' people know that they are the children of God like the people of other *Varnas*, so they cannot be untouchable. In Nepal, the word *Dalit* is widely used.

religious and cultural background distinctive from that of the dominant Hindus. That is, despite being fully incorporated or "assimilated" into Nepali Hindu society these *Dalits* are, like other *Dalits*, generally strongly disadvantaged and poor relative to other Nepali.

About 20% of the people of Nepal fall into the *Dalit* category. These helot craftpersons (Hodgson, 1972[1841]) tend to live in abject poverty. Abject poverty is called "absolute" poverty by a task force on poverty alleviation in Nepal (Task Force Team,1992), conveying a notion of bare subsistence. Two definitions for absolute poverty are cited by this task force, one from the National Planning Commission of Nepal, and one from the World Bank/Nepal. The first agency defined poverty in 1976-77 as below a minimum subsistence level of expenditure with which a person would be able to buy 605 grams of Cereal and 60 grams of pulse to acquire 2256 calories. By following this definition, 40% of Nepali live below the poverty line, about half of whom are *Dalits*. Forty two percent of the rural population and fifteen percent of the urban population survive at this economic level.

The second agency recommended an income of US $150 per person per year in 1988-89 as the bottom-line for defining poverty. This definition finds 71% Nepali living below the poverty line which includes 74 % of the rural population and 42% of the urban population. In this context, the overall socio-economic situation of the *Dalit* community can be best represented in the description of the Task Force Team (1992:5) as follows:

> A household having less than 0.1 ha of standard irrigated land per capita, lacking any other permanent source of income, living in a hut with a dependency ratio of more than three with a poor level of educational attainment (more than 80% illiteracy), chronically facing a problem of food shortages, and without any milch cattle or buffaloes will automatically be defined as the poorest of the poor without computing the index.

Dalits are not, however, all poor; the term refers to a status associated with caste, not an economic one. It is possible for a *Dalit* to have a professional job and a high salary. Still, the people of the *Dalit* community in Nepal can almost always be understood as a hard pressed people no matter in which topography they live, to which ethnicity they belong, which language they speak, or which religion they follow. But interestingly, since these *Dalits* have been treated as service class people for centuries, they basically produce foods for high caste people and they themselves live on what Bungkote[2] *Dalits* call *Nimek* (wage-labor). From this standpoint, one can see the tremendous contribution of *Dalits* to

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[2] Bungkot is the study area of this research. It is situated in Gorkha district of western Nepal. Bungkote is the word used to identify the people of Bungkot.

the development of village economy no matter whether it is the village of this study or any other village of Nepal.

Though Nepali *Dalits* were granted constitutionally equal status in 1962, the state and its hegemony maintained social and religious inequality against them. But the arrival of western type schools (after 1950) broke a socio-religious taboo against *Dalit* schooling in the Sanskrit system or the traditional system of learning in Nepal. Consequently, at present 30% of the Damai population, 27% of the Kami population, and 25% of the Sarki population are literate.

Research Problem

The above literacy figures indicate a situation of educational change for the *Dalit* castes of interest to this thesis, but literacy is not the only measure of educational attainment, and educational attainment does not provide a full picture of the relationship between schooling and a group of people. The curiosity driving this thesis research was centered on that relationship, but the preliminary research questions which I took into the field were derived from my own experience with schooling in Nepal, an awareness that schooling has expanded rapidly throughout the country in the last few decades, and knowledge of sociology of education literature which indicates that marginalized or disadvantaged social groups do not, in general, participate in or benefit from schooling to the same extent as more advantaged social groups. Originally my plan was to study the process of change associated with schooling expansion in a rural village but it became apparent that task would be too large for the time available to me and it was decided to focus the study on one social group within a village, the people in the lowest and least respected position in the caste system. Thus I wanted to know how and why schooling expanded in a *Dalit* community of Nepal, and what its effects were on *Dalit* individuals and the community as a whole.

But as the field work developed, the research question shifted to more general questions; I found myself exploring the relationships between the *Dalits* and schools, the way that relationship is influenced or shaped by the caste system of Nepal, and the way both *Dalits* and non-*Dalits* understand and explain that relationship. A detailed description of the research question and approach are presented in the methodology chapter; to briefly summarize here, the study is a case study of three *Dalit* castes and their relationship to schooling in a rural village of Nepal. To understand this relationship from the perspective of the villagers, and the *Dalits* in particular I lived for two months in the village of Bungkot in Nepal and collected data through observation, discussion, and a household survey. To

understand it in terms of the larger social context I gathered available data on educational change and development in Nepal, and thoroughly reviewed the Hindu understanding of caste. Besides, I reviewed literature on the expansion and effects of schooling in nations of the South and theoretical perspectives on the sociology of inequality and the sociology of education, with a view to seeing if there is any connection between this literature and the *Dalit's* experience with schooling.

Schooling: A Definition for this Study

All three terms commonly used to refer to what happens in schools – education, training, and schooling – indicate a process whereby a child learns different ways for future living. These terms overlap in their meaning. However, according to Wilcox (1988) school developed as an institution with the primary function of socializing children for adult roles. Goodlad (1979:18) sees the school taking over family responsibilities when educational gaps widened. However, for this study my operational definition of schooling refers to the formal school system from primary through secondary and higher education. As such, it refers to schooling of both children and adults, and it does not address in detail what occurs within schools. The type of school implied is the contemporary form in Nepal, largely secular and state controlled, and often called "English" or "western" to contrast it to earlier traditional systems, although attention is paid in the study to older and more traditional forms which partly co-exist with modern schooling in Nepal.

To the extent I continue to address 'expansion' of schooling, the study refers to quantitative increases in the number of schools, the numbers of students who enroll in them, and the increasing number of years students spend in school. Effects or consequences of schooling is intended to convey the meaning of social, psychological, and economic changes in individual lives and the community or society in which individuals live, although I do not claim in the thesis to be able to sort out when and whether schooling, and schooling alone, is responsible for these changes. Overall, both of these terms are largely replaced in the study by the notions of the *Dalit*'s understanding of the place of schools in their lives and their perceptions as to what factors determine its place.

Chapter Organization

This thesis consists of seven chapters, each with sub-topics. In this introductory chapter, I have provided a brief overview of the Nepali educational and socio-cultural context and an introduction to *Dalits* and the thesis problem. In chapter II, I describe sociological theories on inequality and various theories on caste, as well as a social science literature on education as it relates to development and disadvantaged peoples' experience with

schooling. Chapter III presents the research question and methodology while in the succeeding chapter, chapter IV I describe the history of educational development in Nepal. Chapter V details the community context of this research, including presentation of data on schooling in Nepal and Bungkot, some of it available data and some gathered during the course of this research. In chapter VI, I document the experiences of the *Dalit* community of Bungkot's with schooling, including reference to the way that non-*Dalits* speak of that reality. Finally, in chapter VII, I present my conclusions and personal reflections with some recommendations for education.

Chapter II

Literature Review: Social Inequality and Education

Social inequality has been a central problematic of sociological theorizing, so there is a large body of writing on the topic. Caste as a specific form of social inequality is somewhat less explored in this literature but there is a wide literature on caste, some of it framed within western knowledge systems and other more embedded in South Asian religious and social science knowledge and beliefs. To provide a basis for understanding the educational situation of *Dalits* in Nepal, this chapter will first address sociological theories of inequality in general and then turn to caste theories. It will end with a discussion of a literature on schooling and inequality, including both the notion of inequality as displayed in the European and North American literature on 'disadvantaged' students and the development literature which speaks to inequality more in terms of national and community development.

Social Inequality and Social Stratification

Social Inequality: Sociological Theories

This section relies heavily on the theoretical summaries on Grabb (1989). Other sources have also been consulted and are cited when appropriate Theoretical perspectives used to understand social inequality are considered to have evolved significantly with the writings of Karl Marx (1818 - 1883) who is often credited with being one of the first sociological thinkers. Through his writings, Marx came to the conclusion that almost all societies change through the process of forming oppositional classes and in the evolution of capitalism these classes are based on property ownership and "trade" or distributional outcomes, rather than the distribution of power within the society (Calvert, 1982; Wright, 1994). Thus Marx established a view that a relational nature of human interaction and a material realm of human activity work as forces to promote social inequality (Grabb, 1984). The two major classes within capitalism, the bourgeois or owner and proletariat or worker classes, may be thought of as an example of social inequality with the latter forming the 'lower' stratum of the society, if classes are treated as strata.

Max Weber (1864-1920), another sociological thinker, saw the distribution of power within a society somewhat differently. He claimed that the economic standing of a person or a community is associated with status or social prestige for him or her, and not solely a result of the economic relationship. This status along with religious beliefs produces power and differential power results in an unequal society. Weber, in defining the phenomenon of social inequality, is thus pluralistic. He incorporates into his explanation

of social inequality non-economic forces such as ideas and interests that emerged from politics, religion, and institutional structures (Grabb, 1984). But the Marxist sociological thinkers favoured a view of the primacy of economic relations with the maintenance and reproduction of social relations determined partly by the superstructure's state ideology and other hegemonic forces.

Emile Durkheim (1858 1917), a contemporary of Weber, held a functional view of social inequality in place of the positivistic or deterministic view of Karl Marx and multi-deterministic view of Max Weber. He observed that people in a primitive society were always bound together by what he calls mechanical solidarity,[1] a kind of solidarity which usually gets moral impetus from contemporary law and religion. Durkheim argues that modern society is unequal because it lacks collaborative consciousness and the moral values held by primitive society. In this modern society the individuals are united under a new organic solidarity, a solidarity based on shared work or other relationships and these again perpetuate social inequality.

A new sociological perspective, a criticism of earlier sociological efforts, emerged in the 1950s in order to analyze social inequality. Ralf Dahrendorf, for example, is one of the sociological thinkers of the period who criticized both structural functional theory and Marxist theory. According to Dahrendorf the structural functional perspective gave little attention to social realities while the Marxist perspective ignored the role of consensus and integration in modern society. In criticizing the earlier sociologists, Dahrendorf put forward the idea that social inequality is the consequence of authority relations within social and organizational settings. Thus inequality, according to him is no longer the bi-product of antagonistic property relations as Marx claimed.

Gerhard Lenski, another sociologist in the 1960s, argued that differential access to power produces social inequality. Material privilege and power aggravate inequality, generate a politically coercive force to maintain social hierarchy, and create inequalities in a variety of forms such as power, privilege, prestige, property, occupation, education, religion, gender, and age. Another sociologist Nicos Poulantzas who also wrote in the 1960s and 1970s rejected the Marxist view of dogmatic economic determinism as explaining social inequality. He took the position that a worker class such as *Dalits* in Nepal is polarized into a specific social position due to their function or work activity. An intellectual hegemony maintained by contemporary politicians, priests, intellectuals, and the literary figures interprets this situation as natural. This interpretaton is supported by the state which,

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[1] Mechanical solidarity is a union that is based on likeness or similarity of the people.

according to Poulantzas, maintains social inequalities through its political, ideological, and state ideological apparatus. The political apparatus consists of the executive, legislative, judicial, civil service, police, and army; religion, family as well as other social structures form the ideological apparatus and the state ideological apparatus is made up of education and mass media, all of which perpetuate inequalities in a society.

Beginning in the latter part of the 1970s, a new sociological perspective evolved to analyze the causes of social inequalities. Erik Olin Wright, Frank Parkin, and Anthony Giddens provided the theoretical frame to this perspective. Erik Olin Wright introduced an intersection in class relations in order to examine social inequality. His intersection crosses the economic, political, religious, and educational structure of a society, bisecting it not only into an economic bourgeoisie and proletariat but also into an educational bourgeoisie and proletariat. This unequal society, in the view of Erik Olin Wright (1994), can be described in terms of a command class and an obey class. Frank Parkin, on the other hand, identified two forms of closure, basic and secondary, in order to understand the phenomena of social inequality. His basic closures are exclusion and usurpation. Exclusion closure, according to him, is the prime means by which dominant functionaries deny power to their subordinates and hence create social inequality. Usurpation closure is a means for those without power to wrest some power back from those who dominate. His secondary closures are dual and established. Dual closure works as an intermediary between dominating groups and dominated groups while established closure such as traditional beliefs, customs, and habitual practices relegate the dominated groups to a lower stratum of the society.

Anthony Giddens, added a hermeneutic perspective to structural theory to understand social inequality. He holds the view that social inequality is fostered by three factors; functional, authority, and cultural factors. The functional factor separates menial laborers from educated non-menial workers (such as *Dalits* and priests in the Nepali case); the authority factor divides people into those with power over and the powerless and the cultural factor differentiates people according to their distinctive life styles, material consumption, and habits. The power differences between groups reinforce different levels of social interactions and the political, economic, symbolic, and legal institutions create social inequalities. The political institution (state) dominates people, economic institution

allocates material phenomena or resources, symbolic institution[2] creates a domineering environment, and legal/repressive institution[3] maintains social inequalities.

Social Inequality: Caste Theories

Casta, a word of Portuguese origin, means a system of keeping purity of blood. This word, casta, is considered as the origin of the English word "caste" which was borrowed from the French language. In the Spanish world, casta (caste) conveyed a meaning of lineage or race of a 'mixed breed', those people descended from Europeans, East Indians, and Negros. The earlier sociologists such as Senhart, Risley, and Nesfield defined the word caste differently. Senhart thought of caste as an organisation of groups within a society based on religion blended with tradition. Risley, on the other hand, described a caste as a collection of families or groups. Nesfield simply defined caste characteristics: castes disown any connection with other castes through marriage, in food or in drink. V. S. Ketkar (1979), an East Indian living himself in a caste culture, succinctly brings these ideas together as he defined caste as a social group consisting of two characteristics: caste membership is confined to born members and caste members are forbidden by an inexorable social law to marry people outside the group.

The caste culture is seen as originating in the increasing social differentiation, segmentation, and stratification of the Hindu society. Its history dates back to the Vedic period (6000-4000 BC). According to Saraf (1986:170) the Aryans were a homogenous and cohesive group in the early Rigved period; in the middle Rigved period, the group was divided into Brahman and Kshatriya on the one hand and Vaisya on the other; in the late Rigved period the group further divided giving birth to a *Sudra* caste by the end of Brahmanic period; and in the Post-Vedic period some of the *Sudras* were classified as *Asprishya* (non-touchable) and *Sprishya* (touchable). Khatri and Dahal (1987) explain the development of castes differently. In their opinion, prior to the writings of the book *Puru-Sukta* (1000-500 BC), the ancient society was divided into different classes: an economic class[4], power class[5], and religious class[6] and service class. These classes themselves were the *Varnas*. The religious class was known as Brahman *Varna*, the power class was Kshatriya *Varna*, and the economic class was called Vaishya *Varna*.

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2 Religion, education, and communication media.
3 Police, army, and state authority.
4 The economic class consists of Kulin and Nimna, meaning the rich and the poor.
5 The power class was comprised of the Malik, Das, and Dasyu meaning the master, slave, and robber.
6 The religious class was comprised of people categorized as Ayajan, Akarman, Abrahman, Amanush, and Sisnadeva meaning those who do not do sacrifices (Yagnya); those who do not perform duty (Dharma);

The addendum of the *Rigved* known as *Puru-Sukta* provided a religious explanation for the origin of people of the *Varnas* (Sharma, 1980; Sengupta, 1979; Manusmriti, undated; Swami, 1987). One of the verses in *Puru-Sukta* (10-90-12), postulated that human beings originated from a God's body. The persons who were born from the mouth of the God were called Brahman *Varna* and these Brahmans were to do spiritual and religious work. The persons who were considered to be born from the arms of the God were called Kshatriya *Varna* and made responsible for administrative as well as security related work. The third category of people, the Vaishya Varna, were supposed to be born from the thigh of the God and were entrusted to do business and trade. Finally, there were a group of persons who was supposed to be born from the feet of the God and called *Sudra Varna*. The *Sudras* were given the responsibility of providing service and doing menial tasks for the earlier three categories of people, the Brahman *Varna*, the Kshatriya *Varna*, and the Vaishya *Varna*.

Acharya (1986:1744 & 1745) who translated the Rigveda in Hindi gave different interpretations to the verse of the *Puru-Sukta* (10-90-12). According to him, the *Birat Purush* (God) was born from a sacrifice (*Yagnya*): Brahman became his mouth, Kshatriya his arms, Vaishya his thighs, and *Sudra* his feet. Thus, although the verse was interpreted a little bit differently, it conveyed almost the same message that Brahmans belong to the highest status and *Sudra* the lowest. Their *Gun* (quality) and *Swabhav* (nature) were supposed to be the distinguishing parameter from a Brahman to a *Sudra* or vice versa.

The religious book *Bhagawat Geeta* (2800-950 BC) continued the idea of social stratification that was mentioned in the book *Puru-Sukta*. But in addition to it, the *Bhagawat Geeta* made clear that *Sanskritization* (Srinivas, 1977: 6), a process by which a low caste person changes customs, rituals, ideology, and way of life in the direction of high caste, is a way and the only way to upward mobility in the *Varna* system. Thus, *Bhagawat Geeta* introduced the idea of *Karma* (work, good works) as the means of keeping a person in a particular *Varna* or ensuring inter-*Varna* mobility.

As time went on, the ideas of *Bhagawat Geeta* were given a different interpretation through the book called *Manusmriti* (Law of Manu), and Kautilya's Code of Conduct (321-297 BC). Now heredity became the determining factor for establishing a person's particular *Varna* or caste membership. These texts were often quoted to support the importance of maintaining the purity of blood and hence people were discouraged from inter-*Varna*

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those who do not respect the Ved; those who belong to low social status; and those who worship the phallus, respectively.

marriage. The logic was that inter-*Varna* marriage gave birth to a mixed *Varna* or a *'Varnasankar'*. The *Varnasankaras* were supposed to be unfit people for any of the *Varna* systems (Manusmriti, Chapter1 (42 & 43), Chapter 2 (168), Chapter 10 (10: 235), Chapter 10 (12:236); Sharma (1978); Narla, 1979; Shukla, 1987), and thus have been called "outcastes".

The *Prashat* were the learned persons who possessed knowledge of the four *Purush*, and three *Gyan*.[7] They and the authors of *Prakshipta Aansha* [8] of post Vedic literature gave impetus to the Hindu society of Nepal to continue the *Varnashram* system. The *Varnashram* system amalgamated all the determinants of *Varna* as well as the determinants of caste. Thus, individuals of the society were classified on different bases. Some of the people were classified according to their believed origin of birth,[9] others to their color, [10] nature,[11] diet,[12] profession,[13] heredity, marriage,[14] and so forth (Baral, 1993). The current stratification of the Nepali society into caste culture, I would argue, is the result of all these historically evolved determining factors. Now the country has a number of caste groups. Each caste group no matter whether it is an auspicious and pure group, Brahman, or the so-called inauspicious and impure group, *Dalit*, incorporates many sub-castes.

The genesis of interdependent and dependent relations among caste groups of Nepal is usually explained through a description of the *Varnashram*[15] system. This *Varnashram*

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7 The four Purush or Veds are Rigved, Yajurved, Samved, and Atharbaved or history; the three Gyan or types of knowledge are research, economics, and criminology.

8 An addendum to religious texts.

9 God's mouth born person, Brahman at the top; then arms-born person, Kshatriya; then thigh-born person, Vaishya; and in the end the feet-born person, Sudra.

10 People with their white color were known as Brahman, the red color people were Kshatriya, the yellow color people were Vaishya, and the black color people were considered as Sudra.

10 A person possessing Satwa (truth) Gun is a Brahman; possessing Raja (passion) Gun is a Kshatriya; possessing a mixture of Raja and Tama Gun is a Vaishya; and a person possessing Tama (anger) Gun is a Sudra.

11 A person possessing Satwa (truth) Gun is a Brahman; possessing Raja (passion) Gun is a Kshatriya; possessing a mixture of Raja and Tama Gun is a Vaishya; and a person possessing Tama (anger) Gun is a Sudra.

12 A person who eats Satwik food (simple vegetarian) is a Brahman; who eats Rajashi food (varieties of vegetarian and non-vegetarian) is Kshatriya, who eats Rajashi as well as Tamashi food (a food or a drink that makes a person excited, for example meat and alcohol) is a Vaishya; and a person who always eats and drinks Tamashi food (meat and alcohol) is a Sudra. Satwik foods were considered as a means to promote truth; Rajashi, foods for passion; and Tamashi food for anger.

13 Mental workers were called Brahman, the physical workers were became Kshatriya or Vaishya, and menial labor workers were called Sudra.

14 Inter-Varna marriage gives birth to a Varnasankar i.e. a new caste group of people.

15 In the traditional Hindu system of life, there were four Varnas, Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Sudra. The total system was known as the Varnashram system. There were specific Dharma (duties) assigned to the people of each Varna. The Brahman, a person who was supposed to know the cosmogenic cycle was considered as the highest Varna. Traditionally the Brahmans were regarded as intellectual or spiritual elites. Kshatriya was the next Varna. The people of this Varna were responsible for the security of the nation. So

system provides a religious rationale for the relations of dependence and interdependence and above all, legitimizes the existence of a socially unequal community in Nepal. In course of time the caste culture promoted a doctrine (Sivertsen, 1963; Sengupta, 1979) of *Karma* (fate but not work as previously used in *Bhagwat Geeta*), *Jati Dharma* (caste religion), and *Kula Dharma* (ancestral religion). However the caste culture was originally designed under *Varnashram* system to ensure a person's movement from *Pravritt Marga to Nivritti Marga*[16] (Bhattaraya, 1984:25). Brahmapuran, a religious text, gives a proof of a change of a *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudra* to a Brahman (Shrestha Vaidya, 1988: 311 & 312] by following *Nivritti Marga*. As the time went on, the *Prashat*, the priest, and the state imposed caste rules to tighten caste mobility especially for *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudra*. Currently, Nepal has both the *Paninachalne Sudra* and *Panichalne Sudra* as a product of contextual as well as relational phenomenon; as a behavioral norm more than just a cultural entity (Sharma, 1980:172); and as a matter of old tradition (Nepal: Constitution of Nepal, 1959).

According to Dumont (1980), who lived in India and reviewed both the Indian and non-Indian authors' point of view about caste culture, East and West are fundamentally different in their social principles. The East, a Homo Major, has a hierarchical society. This hierarchical society assumes that the human being is a collective institution and a person is a part of the whole society. But the West, a Homo Minor, postulates a person is an indivisible biological being that requires liberty and equality. In this sense, the caste ideology of the East directly contradicts the egalitarian theory of the West. Without understanding these fundamental social differences, it is difficult for Western authors to comprehend the caste system. A similar problem exists with Eastern authors as far as accepting Western perspectives on Eastern contexts is concerned.

Dumont does not concern himself with the genesis of caste but with its stability in the present day. He believes that it is a self-reproducing phenomenon: marital relations, food consumption habits, and the occupation held always keep a person in a caste group. The process of power distribution in the caste hierarchy tightens the caste rule. In order to continue this process, there is a systematic division of power. A Brahman does ritual

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they were known as warriors or political elites. Vaishya was the third Varna. The people of this Varna were responsible for trade and commerce and hence they were trade elites. The fourth group of people were known as Sudra Varna. This was a service class of people. The people of this Varna were made responsible to serve the people of the other three Varnas, Brahman, Kshatriya, and Vaishya. Though this Varnashram system was exclusively designed by the people of the Hindu faith unfortunately one can see its replication among people of the Buddhist religion in Nepal.

16 Pravritti is an activity, action, or avocation to material joy and pleasure. Nivritti is an eternal repose or eternal state to become omniscient, annihilation, or nothingness. Marga is a path of life.

domination, a Kshatriya does political domination, and a Vaishya does economic domination. In Dumont's words "Brahman is spiritually or absolutely supreme although he is materially dependent; whilst the king (Kshatriya) is materially the master he is spiritually subordinate" (1980: 259).

By using Dumont's phrasing, one can argue that a *Dalit* is a supreme trade person but materially dependent on Kshatriya, spiritually dependent on Brahman, and economically dependent on Vaishya. Thus, in Dumont's understanding, the caste system is an expression of social hierarchy with a distribution of power. These caste groups of people, he argues, are horizontally linked, vertically based on a linear or non-cyclic order, and ritually based on purity and impurity. This is an idea that one may not necessarily agree with though it has particular relevance in the modern socio-politico-economic situation.[17]

Drawing more broadly on sociological theory on the origin and reproduction of the caste culture, there are three perspectives, functional, organic structural, and Marxist. The functional perspective postulates caste culture as an ideological system to the smooth functioning of society. The *Varnashram* system is an example of this perspective. The organic structural perspective assumes that the ideological system of the caste culture is a ritualized theory of pollution and purity. For example, a pure caste[18] is always at the top and the impure[19] at the bottom of the social hierarchy. The Marxist perspective contends that caste culture is a bi-product of a continued domination of bourgeoisie over the workers and poor by creating attributional categories such as land owner and landless, and intervention categories such as those based on power relations between caste groups.

Thus one can think of a caste as a form of social stratification, expression of hierarchy, and inequality. For Parsons, caste culture is a manifestation of political power, for Marx it is an economic exploitation, for Weber it is a combination of status and the distribution of power within a community, and for Runciman (1966 cited in Sengupta, 1979) the caste culture is an aggregate of class, status, and power. Runciman's class model is based on economy, status model on occupation, and power model is a combination of both the caste

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17 At least, it is not the case that purity and impurity define only a caste relationship, or define it completely. A person with an unwashed face in the morning is impure for religious ritual even for others of his or her caste; a menstruating woman is impure for four consecutive days so she and her husband are forbidden to sleep together, eat together, sit together, or touch each other; a bereaved family (through death) is impure for its kin. Moreover, a Dalit caste is always impure for non-Dalits, and in many cases, Vaishya is impure for Kshatriya, Kshatriya is impure for Brahman; and in some cases (such as touching a dead body of a Vaishya by a Brahman) a Brahman is impure for Vaishya. Taking a holy bath, undergoing rituals, and taking time makes a person pure. Thus purity and impurity permeate relations in life and are not confined to inter-caste relationships.

18 Panichalne in general and Brahman in particular

19 Panichalne Sudra in general and Paninachalne tatha Chhununahune Sudra in particular.

and the status. But the eastern scholars (Sengupta, 1979: Stvertsen, 1963: Singh, 1980) on the other hand found hereditary status, diet, occupation, marriage rules, (Appendix VI Table 29) and Manu's code of conduct as the basis of caste culture.

Sharma(1980) assesses some empirical studies about caste culture in India and concludes that castism is a cultural as well as a structural system. As a cultural-universalistic system, he argues, caste is a matter of ideology and a value system, particularly that of hierarchy while as a cultural particularistic system caste is a social reality based on the ideology of pollution and purity. On the other hand a caste, as a structural universalistic system, is a general phenomenon of a closed form of social stratification while as a structural particularistic system, it is an institutionalized system of integration among hierarchically ranked groups for functional use such as marriage, occupation, enforcement of cultural values, norms, and other interactive modes of behavior.

Social Inquality and The *Dalit*s in a Caste System

Dalit castes according to Hindu teachings belong to a caste group of the further stratified Sudra *Varna*. *Dalit*, the God's feet-born person according to Hindu legend, a *Daas* (slave) or *Dasyu* (robber) or *Dravidian* (Prashrit, 1991), a black person or an oppressed person of a non-Aryan stock (Baral, 1993) are the people who belong to *Sudra Varna*. Now there are three caste groups under the umbrella term of *Sudra Varna*, *Panichalne tatha Chhunahune Jat*, *Paninachalne tara Chhunahune Jat*, and *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Jat*[20] categorized as to the presence or absence of two characteristics, other castes being able to accept water from them and other castes being able to touch them. The *Panichalne tatha Chhunahune Sudra* were again divided into *Masine tatha Namasine*[21] during the Malla period (879-1767). The last category of *Sudra* whom Shah (1994) calls a "*Pancham Varna*" (fifth *Varna*) remained to be *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Jat*. A community of the *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Jat* was the community in which this thesis research was undertaken.

Dalit is not a caste but a politically coined word used to refer to a socially backward caste community; it does not refer to an ethnic group or a social class, but a group of people who according to Borale (1980) suffer from social hate since traditionally they were the people

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[20] Panichalne means the people of all Varnas accept water from these groups of people. Paninachalne means they do not accept water. Similarly, Chhunahune means the people of all Varnas can touch these groups of people. Chhunanahune means they are not supposed to be touched. Tatha means or, Tara means but, and Jat means caste.

[21] Those who could be enslaved, or killed were called Masine and who were not supposed to be enslaved or killed were known as Namasine.

characterized by *Adarshata* (unseeability, they were not to be seen by other castes), *Ashokshata* (unteachability, they could not be taught), *Asahasanasyata* (unseatability; they could not sit beside other castes), *Akshitadasyakaryata* (doing socially degraded work), and *smashanavasyata* (living only in or near burial grounds). There are *Dalits* scattered everywhere in Nepal. To name some of the few, there are Damai, Kami, Sarki, and Gaine in the hills, Pode, Kasain, Duiyan, and Chyame in Kathmandu, the capital city; and Dom, Dushad, Dhobi, and Mushahar in the southern plain. They vary in the size of their population, literacy attainment, and political awareness but they receive a similar type of social treatment no matter whether they live in the hills, capital city, and southern plain of Nepal or they follow a Hindu or Buddhist way of life. Stephen Fuchs (1981: 4) has aptly reported the situation of *Dalits* in India which is equally true in Nepal and in the case of Bungkote *Dalits*.

> An untouchable has no rights, only the duty to submit to any order and any kind of treatment by the members(sic) of the Hindu castes. He is mercilessly exploited, socially degraded and humiliated, forced to live in squalor and unhealthy surroundings, often deprived of the essential human necessities. He is taught to accept his lot without any murmur, as the fruit of his *Karma*, the results of his misdeeds in a former life which can be atoned only by a patient and uncomplaining acceptance of his present state.
>
> Hindus should not associate with them, marry nor even have casual sex relations with them. They are debarred from Hindu temples and places of worship, from the celebration of feasts, offerings, and sacrifices. They should be kept in ignorance of the higher religious values of Hinduism, of the tenets and truth of the sacred scriptures.

In principle, Nepal is a Hindu kingdom[22] which at a religious level would partially explain the situation of the *Dalits*, but practically Nepali are half Hindu and half Buddhist in the sense that they go to each other's temple and pay homage to the same Gods and Goddesses according to names which vary depending on their faith.[23] But the *Dalits*, though called Hindu are debarred from entering into Hindu temples and monasteries as Fuchs indicates and they are *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Jat* to both major religious groups, Hindu and Buddhist.[24] Although Hindu, their relationship to other Hindus is perhaps more accurately expressed by Fuch than he realizes, for his text is written as if the *Dalits* themselves are not 'members of a Hindu caste'.

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22 According to the census data of 1991 the Nepal populations is 86.5% Hindu, 7.8% Buddhist, 3.5% Islam, 2.1% others, and 0.1% "do not mention their religious faith".

23 For example, Pashupatinath is a four headed Hindu God and the same God is Abalokiteswor to the people of Buddhist faith. Similarly, Manjushree is a Buddhist Goddess and the same Goddess is Saraswati, the Goddess of knowledge for the Hindu. Moreover, the word Hindu embraces the people of Buddhist, Jain, and Sikh faiths in the definition used by the World Hindu Organization in Nepal.

There are a number of theories and explanations to describe the origin of these particular castes, these squalor habitat *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudra, Dalit* (Baral, 1993; Fuchs, 1981; Quigley, 1994; Mitra, 1994). Nesfield's occupational explanation, Ambedkar's dietary explanation, Dubois's political theory, Hocart's religious theory, Risley's as well as Hutton's racial theory and so forth have explained the reasons why a person or a group of persons come(s) to the lowest echelon of society. Bougle (1971: 9) theorizes the basis of caste culture and finds three tendencies in it namely mutual repulsion, sacred hierarchy, and hereditary specialization. However some Nepali authors concluded that a *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudra (*or *Dalit)* caste is a consequence of bourgeoisie oppression (Bhattarai, 1993, Prashrit, 1991), professional inferiority (Koirala, 1987), enlargement of the orthodox *Varnashram* system (Rai, 1994: Yatri, 1994) and breaking of contemporary rules and regulations (Bhatta, 1994).

Comment

The theoretical frames presented in this section provide some possibiity of closure to understanding the phenomenon of social inequality for *Dalits* in Nepal. They also provides a way of looking at Bungkot *Dalits* as unequal or "underclass" human beings of the Nepali society. These *Dalits* may not be exactly the same as what Wright (1994) Westergaard (1995), and Ogbu (1986) term an "underclass" as according to these authors, "underclass" human beings are those who are only economically oppressed. But the case of Nepali *Dalit* is more than economic oppression. These *Dalits* are socially oppressed, economically hard pressed, politically silent, educationally illiterate, and a religiously hated group of people. These human beings of the Nepali society are the victims of what Wright (1994) calls the achievement model (achievement apparently by effort) or the exploitation model (achievement by exploitation) of social inequality. They are the bi-product of, what Centres (1949) calls economic stratification (gradation of wealth), political stratification (hierarchy, authority and prestige), occupational stratification, and egoistic stratification (personal group behavior). And they are oppressed by following the *Varnashram* system, a particular way of understanding caste relationships under Hinduism.

Drawing on these theoretical frames of social inequality and the genesis of the caste system I hold the view that in analyzing the caste formation with the *Dalits* in general in mind and Bungkot *Dalit* in particular, Anthony Giddens is very close with his three factors that produce social inequality, functional, authority, and cultural and his four types of

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[24] Interestingly, all the people including Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Jat, no matter whether they belong to Hindu or Buddhist community, also treat Muslims as Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Jat.

institutions, political, economic, symbolic and legal/repressive that constantly work to maintain various forms of inequality.

Functionally, since *Dalits* belong to the lowest stratum of the Eastern hierarchical society, they were entrusted to do *Antaja*[25] occupation. There is no consensus among the *Prashats* whether a person became *Dalit* because of the occupation or the person became *Dalit* first and then was entrusted to do *Antaja* occupations for a livelihood. Manu, in Manusmriti, argues for the second reason but some other *Prashats*, and modern economic theorists, such as Nesfield, believe that the profession they hold made them *Dalit*. Whatever may be the historical reasons, it is obvious that *Dalits* have held *Antaja* occupation traditionally.

Culturally, as is evident in the above text and other religious texts in this chapter, the religious interpretation of caste also provided legitimation for inequality and in particular poverty among the *Dalits*. Closely tied in with the Brahman class, these religious texts could be seen as part of an intellectual hegemony providing explanations to legitimize caste relationships. But they also provide alternative texts, texts which could be read as having quite different meanings than the more commonly accepted Hindu texts, suggesting the potential for using cultural ideas to promote change rather than only to maintain the status quo.

In relation to authority the Nepali *Dalit* fall under what Olin Wright calls the obey class category who, according to Manusmriti, were supposed to be one of the socially outcaste groups of people, and who (a) were produced by the relationship of pure and mixed caste (b) had lost their status on account of neglect of sacred rites (c) were excluded from the community for some reasons (d) were slaves and their descendants, and (e) were excluded from the community of four *Varnas*, along with their descendants (Keltkar, 1979: 83).

In institutional terms in the case of Nepali *Dalit*, the state made rules for do's and don'ts in different time periods, the economic institutions allocated to *Dalits* a little less land than what they needed to grow food for their self-sufficiency, the symbolic institutions restricted *Dalits* from getting access to traditional "knowledge" and provided a continued surveillance against their practice, and legal/repressive institutions maintained the caste rules set by the state authorities.

In this context, I re-understood *Dalit* as a consequence of the hierarchical principle of the Eastern society. The purpose of introducing the hierarchical principle was to identify social

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25 In Sikhandapuran (one of the Hindu religious books), according to S. K. Yadav (1983), there are three kinds of occupation: Uttam (good ones), Adham (the lower ones) and Antaja (the last one). Harijan (Dalit) are Antaja occupation holders

inequality in all spheres of life, no matter whether it was spiritual, functional, dietary, economic, social, occupational, or educational. To put it differently, the caste hierarchy is a result of the stratification based on self as well as societal evaluation and the parameters of evaluation were drawn from the contemporary social code of conduct.

But none of these theories of stratification or inequality indicates the role of schooling or education in the production (and reproduction) of unequal societies. We must turn to a sociology of education literature for some possible insights into that aspect of this study.

Social Inequality and Schooling

Anthropological research on schooling which relates to inequality dates back to the early 1900's. Ogbu in his 1994 overview of schooling research states that some anthropologists such as Hewett (1976, originally 1905), Boas (1928) and Malinowski (1976, originally 1936), all conducted research on schooling. Hewett highlighted the educational problems of immigrants, American Indians and natives of the Philippines, and concluded that schooling forced them to learn the "higher" Anglo-American culture. Boas, foreshadowing Bourdieu's work of the 1970's, developed a theoretical perspective that emphasized cultural relativism and argued that differences in culture brings differences in school performance while Malinowski rejected such a claim contending performance differences were a result of, in his example, Africans receiving intellectually inferior schooling compared to Europeans.

Research on schooling took a more multi-disciplinary approach in the 1950s. Spindler (1963) in Germany, Wylie (1957) in France, and Read (1955) in Africa did ethnographic studies. These studies focused on school problems, and put forward a narrow view of culture (minority culture, school culture, mainstream culture, immigrant culture). In the 1960s and 1970s a positivistic scientific tradition which sought to prove or disprove the influence of specific variables on schooling outcomes for students became the dominant research orientation, while in the 1980s, a humanistic trend emerged which analyzed schooling from a holistic, qualitative, and interpretive perspective (Husen, 1994; Landsheere, 1994; Angus, 1986). The earlier research had two main foci. It either assessed the role and effectiveness of schooling in a community relying on fact finding and head counting (the more children in school, the more effective it was) or analyzed class culture and the influence of class membership on school success. The more positivistic scientific tradition was initiated right after World War II in Britain and nurtured by the correspondence theory of Bowles and Gintis, among others, in the United States (Erickson, 1994; Angus, 1986; McPherson & Willms, 1986). One of the concerns with

these studies was to cross-check macro data on schooling with empirical findings at the community, local, or micro level.

From these works came the conclusions that schooling perpetuated the social selectivity of specific class members, produced and supported the myth that schooling 'improves' people, emphasized competitiveness, promoted certificating and credentialing and through these functions increased people's chances of gaining employment, on the Asian continent conditioned people to become employees rather than take initiative, in Britain contributed to social immobility, in Kenya provided legitimation for hiring people into higher positions (Dore, 1970), promoted capitalist reproduction which included controlling access to education, limited educational expansion in "conditioned capitalist states" (Carnoy, 1990), and finally produced culturally indifferent and socially "good and loyal" people while reproducing the class relations of the larger society among Mexican Indians (Foley, 1991).

Ogbu's 1978 review of contemporary theories was based on his cross country studies of both natives and the non-native students belonging to autonomous minority, caste or castelike minority, and immigrant minority groups. By autonomous minority he means people with distinct racial, ethnic, religious, linguistic, and cultural identity and not totally subordinated economically or politically to the dominant group, such as Jews, Amish, and Mormons in the United States. The second type of minority groups he studied were caste or caste like minority groups whose social, economic, and political roles in the society were sharply defined by the dominant group and reinforced by political and economic subordination. Blacks in the United States, scheduled castes in India and Burakumin in Japan fall into this category. The third type of minority Ogbu studied was the immigrant minorities such as West Indians in Britain and Puerto Ricans, Indians and Mexican-Americans in the United States who ideally lie between autonomous and caste minority groups.

In his study, Ogbu found that there were pronounced differences between the language and the culture of the minority groups compared to the dominant groups. But these differences do not necessarily lead to school failure. For example, the autonomous minority groups in his sample did well because of a cultural frame that promoted school success. So did the voluntary immigrant minority of Vietnam and Cambodia in the United States. But the case of caste minorities or involuntary minorities was different. These caste minorities such as Blacks in the United States and scheduled castes in India could not do well in the mainstream school partly because of their parents denyng them access to schooling and partly because of institutionalized discrimination against them. Ogbu drew the conclusion that autonomous and voluntary minority groups differ from caste minority groups in their

survival strategy. The survival strategy of the first two groups of minorities required success in schooling and hence their home environment promoted a culture which included success in school. The caste minority groups, on the other hand, closed the door to school success, developed negativism towards schooling, developed alternative survival strategies which did not involve schooling, and finally developed frustrating relations with schooling. To explain this behaviour Ogbu pointed to the importance of social forces outside school that influenced the success or failure of the students of minority groups.

The potent force outside the school which Ogbu emphasized worked against the schooling of caste minority groups was job ceiling. Through defining his concept of job ceiling Ogbu describes the occupational experiences of castelike minorities:

> The term means that (a) members of castelike minorities are not permitted to compete freely as individuals for any types of jobs to which they aspire and for which they are qualified; (b) castelike minorities are either excluded from the most desirable occupations or not permitted to obtain their proportionate share of such jobs, solely because of their caste status rather than because they lack the requisite training; and (c) as a result of these restrictions, castelike minorities are confined largely to the least desirable jobs. In the castelike societies, occupations are thus divided into two broad categories: those above the job ceiling and those below it (1978:29)

Thus he argues that children of caste or caste minority groups are shaped by an external force, in particular a 'job ceiling' which influences their school success and occupational hopes and aspirations. As Ogbu found, the school system of the dominant group always prepares a child of a minority group to accept occupations below that group's job ceiling. These jobs include semi-skilled workers, personal and domestic service workers, common laborers, and farm laborers. The same school system on the other hand prepares the students of the dominant groups to treat these same occupations as a job 'floor', so they seek jobs above it. These jobs are professionals and technicians; managers, officials, and proprietors; clerical sales and kindred workers; and skilled craftsperson and foreperson. The cultural idiom cultivates and continues the notion that some jobs are better than others and the people of the dominant group must hunt the job above the subordinate group's job ceiling. Thus the notion of job ceiling shapes the perception of the caste minorities so that they see the benefits of schooling to them are limited. Besides, these caste minorities do not see any serious efforts to school their children. Thus, the caste minorities are either disillusioned about their future or doubtful about the value of schooling. Ogbu (1978:194) further contends that a child learns the job ceiling for him or her not by someone's

instruction but by observing the job experiences of their parents, older siblings, other relatives, family friends, and neighbors.

In the sociology of education, questions such as why a caste or caste like minority group of people feel uncomfortable in the educational institutions of the dominant society were also asked. According to Emihovich's 1994 summary, prior to 1970 researchers addressing this issue often neglected the culture of minority groups by labeling it a "culture of poverty." They assumed that the students of the caste or caste like minority groups fail in mainstream school because of their poverty and the culture which was associated with being poor. But after 1970 other theoretical perspectives were developed to explain this situation, which are: (a) the cultural continuity/discontinuity approach (b) the secondary culture discontinuity approach (c) the cultural reproduction approach, and (d) the culture and cognition approach.

The cultural continuity/discontinuity theory focused on cultural-linguistic patterns in the environment through longitudinal studies. These studies determined that the school environment was not compatible with the home environment of the caste or caste like minority children. The "success code" to learning such as eye contact, classroom participation, or other forms of social interaction was alien to them, because it consisted of culturally specific patterns. This situation resulted in the children of the caste or caste like minority groups being low achievers compared to their counterparts from the dominant groups. One conclusion from this research is that teaching is primarily a linguistic process and the work gave birth to special programs to help the students of 'culturally deprived' minority groups so they could learn in school what other children learned at home.

The secondary culture discontinuity theorists were of varied nature. Some of them focused on cultural discontinuity while others emphasized cultural conflict, institutional deficiency, educational equality, or biogenetic inability. John Ogbu (1978) reviewed those theories prevailing in the United States that were used to explain the failure of the children of the caste or castelike minority groups in the school of the mainstream society. Referring to the same theory of cultural deprivation as Emihovich he adds the point that educators following this theory devised collaborative programs between teachers and the parents so that a parent could understand the school environment and a teacher, on the other hand, can come to understand the home environment. Eventually they should be able to work together to bridge the home and the school environment.

The cultural conflict theorists came up with the notion that the culture of the caste or the castelike minorities conflicts directly with the school culture or the culture of the dominant group. This cultural conflict always creates tension for the students of the caste or the

castelike minority groups which causes low achievement. Following this conclusion, the cultural conflict theorists recommended pluralistic approaches to school programs and a tolerant environment which would foster cultural diversity in schools.

The institutional deficiency theorists, echoing Malinowski, argued that schools serving poor or disadvantaged groups are poorly managed and inadequately supported in terms of both physical and human resources. It means the school by nature makes less serious effort to prepare students of these groups to compete with the dominant society. These theorists suggested various forms of institutional improvement in terms of resources and management.

The educational equality theorists pointed out the availability of inadequate educational opportunities to the students of the caste or the castelike minority groups. Based on their findings they recommended special package programs and positive discrimination policies to ensure educational access and equal opportunity for children of minority groups. However they also emphasized that, in the United States, Black and White children should attend the same school, have the same curriculum, and not pay tuition for school.

Jensen's biogenetic theory claimed that Blacks are genetically inferior to the Whites and have different mental patterns for thinking, understand and creating. The resulting policy recommendation was for special techniques of classroom instruction for children of castelike minority groups. The techniques included memorization or rote learning, trial and error learning and the like to ensure students of minority groups "succeed" in school. Although not making a genetic claim, theorists that support different dominant brain hemispheres for minority and majority students make a similar curriculum and pedagogical recommendation.

The cultural reproduction theorists tried to understand the sociology of education from a different perspective. Coleman (1987 cited in Emihovich, 1994) developed the idea that the students of the minority groups came to school with no "social capital." By social capital he did not mean income but recognizing the importance of education which constructs social capital through schooling. This idea sounds somewhat like Ogbu's survival strategy of minority groups, and is another way of saying that such groups have 'low educational aspirations'. Coleman's ideas were challenged by Bourdieu, Passeron, and Willis with their cultural capital theory. These cultural capital theorists drew ideas from different sociologists – structural functional, critical, and interpretive – criticized them, and came up with a strong theoretical perspective on the sociology of education.

For example, they picked up Durkheim's view that school has a conservative function which ensures cultural reproduction as "symbolic goods." They criticized this conservative function of school and incorporated Althusser's, Gramsci's, and Bowles and Gintis's Marxist viewpoint to describe the role of school in social reproduction. The cultural reproduction theorists such as Bourdieu saw capitalist domination, its relations of exploitation, and its reproduction through the school system as usually serving its master, the capitalist class. Young's (1971) idea that the legitimized knowledge of the capitalist school system was a power enabling the dominant society to control the minority groups was further evidence of this relationship to cultural reproduction theorists. School is seen as providing labels to legitimize school knowledge and the nature of domination.

Another critical pedagogue, Basil Bernstein(1973), addressed the crucial role of pedagogy in social reproduction. The underlying principle of the dominant society, Bernstein argues, provides a knowledge code that shapes the curriculum. The curriculum then defines valid knowledge, pedagogy denotes the valid transmission of that knowledge, and evaluation defines what counts as valid realization of the knowledge. Thus as students learn that knowledge they incorporate an understanding of themselves and the world which supports existing relations of dominance. Paulo Freire, on the other hand, drawing on Marxist literature blended with his Christian theological beliefs, developed a liberative humanistic pedagogy to break the culture of silence, to promote critical knowledge and critical consciousness enabling students to replace the traditionally 'banked' knowledge of the capitalist system. That is, in Bernstein's terms, to identify the 'knowledge code' which shapes their world and find ways to speak out against it and change it.

Bourdieu (1977) saw cultural and social reproduction as an accomplished role of schooling. He found that school holds the cultural capital of the controlling class and transmits this capital to students, but transmits it unevenly for children of the controlling class already 'know' much of it wheras other children do not. Thus, the structural dynamism of class relations is nurtured and replicated through the medium of schooling. Tradition approves what the school does, certification distributes the social category which succeeds in school, pedagogic communication transmits the code of work of the controlling class, and eventually the process creates a circle in which cultural capital is replicated through schooling.

In the school, Bourdieu contends, the hierarchy of grades corresponds to social cultural capital held by different groups, which is displayed through over representation of specific grades or marks to specific groups of students. The over represented groups of students becomes a symbolic product of the education system and other students are encouraged or

asked to follow the knowledge, style of being, speaking, or behaving that they display on a symbolic market. Thus, the students of the less or not represented groups begin to eliminate themselves because they don't fit with the model displayed by over represented groups. In the society, Bourdieu further argues, social hierarchy becomes seen as the gift of merit or a reflection of the academic hierarchy and this perpetuates the social order. Academic success thus means dominating groups accumulating cultural capital, economic capital, and power relations, and academic capital sanctions the related hierarchical status. If some of the students of the less or not represented groups miraculously succeed in gaining academic excellence it becomes a testimony of academic democracy to the controlling groups. Thus, Bourdieu (1977:503 & 504) points out the constant force towards reproduction of cultural capital that work together in society and in the school system.

Many other areas of educational research speak to the situation in Nepal and the situation of the *Dalit*s, such as studies on the expansion of schooling and schooling impacts on individuals and society. For example, at the broader theoretical level, and from a structural-functional perspective, according to Goodlad (1979) "schooling expanded as a solution to a societal problem, as a foundation to freedom, as a guarantee for the future, as a cause of prosperity and power, as a bastion of political security, as a source of intellectual and philosophical enlightenment", and as a way to prepare children for adult roles (Wilcox, 1988:271). On the other hand, from a critical perspective, schooling expanded to promote and maintain the social status quo (Peshkin, 1988: 4; King, 1963) and to reproduce and maintain the existing class structure and international relations of imperialism (Carnoy, 1976).

Several more sophisticated arguments can be identified which claim to account for the expansion of schooling (human capital theory, consumption theory, modernization theory, political integration theory, social control theory, and ideological diffusion theory) but a single theory may not be able to explain or predict schooling expansion (Archer, 1982, Levy, 1982, Craig & Spear, 1982). However, according to Archer (1982), there are researchers who argue economic changes and requirements are the primary force behind the expansion of schooling (Harbison & Myers, 1964; Clark, 1961), class and status competition are the factors behind the population's demand for education and thus for the expansion of schooling (Collins, 1971 & 1979), and a desire to maintain the social status quo, and especially to create and maintain hegemony through the transmission of appropriate beliefs are reasons the more powerful classes support the expansion of schooling (Carnoy, 1982; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Katz,

1974). Politically, some researchers (cited in Archer, 1982), see the drive to build a nation or national consciousness as behind the expansion of schooling, and an interest to compete with and integrate into a wider world as reasons for the expansion of schooling (Ramirez & Bali , Archer, 1979; Rubinson, 1987; Bali, Ramirez & Meyer, 1985 cited in Archer, 1982). Others note that policy makers belief that schooling is a stimulus for the cognitive and affective changes needed for modernization and that schooling ensures economic growth, as well as individuals' search for a secure social position in the society all contribute to its expansion (Lockheed, Verspoor & associates, 1991; Eisemon, 1987) of schooling.

Research on the effects of schooling shows similar types of observations. The conflict or critical perspective evaluates schooling from a Marxist framework and argues that schooling perpetuates class inequality, promotes docility and blind obedience, develops what Gramsci calls "civil society" or what Bowles and Gintis call "reproduction of the class culture" especially in what Carnoy (1990) calls "conditioned capitalist nations." Interactionists analyze schooling from a hermeneutic framework and argue that schooling does not adequately negotiate the meaning generated through the lived reality of the people and the current curriculum content, so much of what school's teach is seen as irrelevant to students. Because these perspective each essentially frame a different problematic, they produce different observations about the effects of schooling in the nations of the South. But Ogbu (1994) observes much of the culturally grounded research on schooling, no matter whether from the nations of South or the nations of the North, really follows an 'omnibus' model, incorporating issues of enculturation, cultural oppression, cultural discontinuity, adaptation, and instrumental, transactional, and ecological social models.

However, what is sometimes called 'development theory' does not so much explain schooling outcomes as seek to shape them. The dominant paradigm of development, "modernization" theory (evolutionary, structural functional, modernization, and human capital theories as classified by Fagerlind and Saha, 1989) has shaped the outputs of schooling in many ways. But the assumption of the modernization paradigm that schooling promotes economic growth, ensures social mobility, develops cultural solidarity, and eventually makes a country developed has been questioned through a number of critical studies done in the nations of South. This research has focused on what Leys (1989) calls "inward oriented" development through schooling and claims that schooling has become instrumental in perpetuating social selectivity and reproducing inequalities in Ghana (Weis, 1981) and in Jordan (Qawasmeh, 1986); cultivating a false dream of upward mobility in Kenya (Nkyinyangi, 1982), marginalizing people of low income and scheduled caste

groups and scheduled tribes in India (Kumar-D, 1976), and in the Philippines (Foley, 1976); and promoting a meritocratic class in Peru (Van den Berghe, 1978) and in African nations such as Upper Volta and Niger (Elion, 1976). Similarly, schooling in the nations of South has been a vehicle to alienate people from their home culture and maternal language (Bacchus, 1980, Illich, 1971; Carnoy & Werthen, 1979); and has promoted people to "fit in" the culture in Yap (Lingenfelter, 1981). As a result, there is conflict over maintaining the indigenous language in Mozambique (Mondlane, 1983), and about penetrating of the "western" values such as individualism and competitiveness in Vietnam (Kelly, 1978), in Malaysia (Watson, 1980), and in India (Basu, 1978).

Schooling not only has become a means to create social stratification and cultural oppression but also it has become a tool to encourage brain drain from the nations of the South to the nations of the North paradoxically benefiting the latter rather than developing the former (Toh, 1971; Watanabe, 1969). Similarly, it has become a factory to produce unemployed graduates (Simmons, 1980; Miller, 1990). In the same way, schooling has done political injustice to nations of the South (Toh, 1987), become an agent of oppression (by promoting the banking concept of knowledge and by denying a liberating role to schooling) in Latin American and African nations (Freire, 1976), become a factory to produce "safe" people who support the colonial power (Berman, 1979; Bray, 1984), and schooling has contributed to gender inequality by becoming one of the safeguards of gender ideology in Ecuador (Rosemary, 1984), by reproducing gender inequalities of the society in Nigeria (Dim, 1985) and by supporting what Dale (1982) calls "licensed autonomy" or limited access to opportunity for women.

In summary, critical research on schooling has provided information that schooling has demonstrated almost solely negative effects on societies and nations of the South, and to the people of the fourth world (native people and ethnic minorities) in spite of its assumption to modernization through schooling. In the first place, these studies pointed out that schooling promoted a few people with a vested interest in the society as it existed; these people produced, controlled, and distributed knowledge to a limited number of people, and discouraged the wide distribution of knowledge or of certain types of knowledge in the society. In the second place, schooling facilitated the mainstream culture, reproduced societal inequalities, and maintained the social status quo. In the third place, schooling dehumanized people by depositing irrelevant facts and figures in their heads instead of empowering and liberating them. In the fourth place, schooling perpetuated a capitalist culture including behavior such as individualism and competitiveness and discouraged collectivism and cooperation. In the fifth place, schooling produced the

cultural emigré, the man or woman who is no longer comfortable in their home culture and who must move elsewhere to find economic and personal satisfaction and rewards. In the sixth place, schooling produced unemployed graduates who lacked hands-on skills needed for productive labor. Finally, schooling secluded students from social reality, restricted upward mobility and become an instrument of social control, by promoting conventional social roles. As Fagerlind and Saha (1989) note critical perspective has analyzed schooling phenomena from its social reproduction and transformation thesis, by focusing on external factors that influence schooling and by ignoring internal structure of the society, and as Angus(1986) observes it has not always provided possible directions for change (Angus, 1986).

Contrary to these critical findings, there is research from the 1960s and 1970s (Eisemon, 1987) that positively evaluates the influence of schooling on modernization of societies in the nations of the South (i.e. integration of pre-capitalist agrarian societies into a world economic system). These research studies concluded that schooling fostered the adoption of modern values and beliefs by changing perceptions of self and society, by ensuring cognitive changes in the individual's ability, by increasing productive capacity, by improving health, and by lowering women's fertility rate.

Nepal, the *Dalit*s and Schooling Research

Research on schooling in Nepal started in the early 1960s with the establishment of the Regmi Research Center in Kathmandu. Currently, there is one research center attached to Tribhuvan university, plus university faculties that exclusively do research in schooling and some private and non-government agencies that do schooling research. The research studies done in Nepal to date have analyzed schooling from a structural-functional and utilitarian perspective and most of them are quantitative in nature. However there is one ethnographic study (Ragsdale, 1989) on a Gurung community, and quasi qualitative research in other communities (Gurung, 1984; Niroula, 1980; Upadhyaya, 1984). There is no research on schooling that is exclusively or partly done with a *Dalit* community, although Upadhyaya brought forward some *Dalit* educational issues. There are also no empirical studies similar to those in the section above which explicitly deal with the notion of schooling expansion, but some of the research (Pande, 1978; Uprety, 1962) has given a brief account of the development of education in Nepal. Nevertheless in these studies, one cannot find empirical reasons for the development and extension of schooling into Nepali communities nor can one find information on people's experiences with schooling in their community.

A review of the international literature at the University of Alberta library and the literature available in Nepal during my field work (April 5 to August 4 1995) presented no explanations for the schooling development in Nepal, nor on how people experience schooling at the community level. However, literature addressing 'schooling effects' does give some answers, or more accurately a contradictory picture of schooling/community relationships. For example Tilak (1994), by analyzing the secondary data available from Unesco and the World Bank, concludes that schooling has a positive effect on Asian nations, including Nepal. Other empirical as well as evaluative studies also claim that schooling has a positive effect on development at the community level in Nepal (Gurung, Huntington, & Pande, 1989; CERID, 1984; Noroula, 1980; Upadhyaya, 1984; Dharam Vir, 1988;). These researchers present data showing correlations between education and earnings, employment, productivity and political development, and conclude that schooling contributes to economic growth, reduces poverty, and strengthens democracy in the Asian region including Nepal. Echoing the structural functional perspective this literature also presents the conclusion that schooling helped develop self-esteen, persuaded people to participate in development, raised social status, and helped improve the individual's economy, whether high-caste Brahman or low caste *Dalit* in Nepal.

In contrast to these findings, suggesting the international concept of a 'brain-drain', schooling has been considered a vehicle to take people out of the community and away from the occupations in the community. For example, a study done by CERID (1988) observes that if a person is half educated in the Tharu community[25] of southern Nepal he leaves the plow; if he is fully educated he leaves the family i. e., in the Tharu language, *Adho padho harse gayo; singhro padho gharse gayo.*

Comment

The literature discussed in the first section of this chapter, on class and caste, provides a description and explanation of the social processes which lead to and maintain caste relations in societies, but has little to say directly about how that plays out in schools or how schooling is part of those social processes. This literature discussed in the second section focuses on schooling and places schools at the centre of the relationship, actively participating through curriculm, pedagogy, and evaluation in determining where dropouts and graduates from schools will be placed in society.

25 This is a language/ethnic group which makes up 3.6% of the Nepali population.

This review of the critical and interpretive literature on schooling in the nations of South and North has provided me with a theoretical perspective to look at the question of what a *Dalit* community experiences and the claims they put forward about the effect of schooling on an individual and on their community life in Nepal. This perspective includes the notion that schooling has (a) become an instrument to reproduce the larger society by nurturing gender inequality, and sustaining ethnic oppression, castism and class values through both its explicit and hidden curriculum (b) imposed western values of modernization (individualism and competitiveness) (c) encouraged a brain drain and produced unemployed graduates (d) produced "safe" and docile citizens instead of making them liberated human beings (e) ignored people's understanding of schooling, meaning of schooling to them, and experience on the effects of schooling on their community (f) produced culturally alienated personalities, and (g) above all ensured improved health, better production, and a positive attitude to development, but all of this at the cost of various repressions such as cultural, linguistic, and humanistic.

These observations will be considered when the data on the Bungkot *Dalit* case is analyzed in the sixth chapter. At that point I will examine the experience of a *Dalit* community and its experience with schooling in a manner which is primarily critical interpretive. That is, my interest was to understand from the critical perspective the existence of the *Dalit* community in the larger society and its relationship to schooling. And before doing my critical analysis I will seek to know and interpret a *Dalit* community's perspective on schooling in their life, and what meaning education has to them.

Chapter III
Research Question and Methodology

Personal Background to the Research

Four factors contributed to my decision to undertake this research. One was the fact that I could find no existing studies which addressed the process of schooling extending into a community it had not previously penetrated, much less the experience of a *Dalit* community undergoing that process and being effected by schooling at the individual and village or community level in Nepal. Two, the analysis of theories which sought to explain the influence of schooling and the related research findings developed my curiosity to understand that phenomena in a community in my home country. Three, the theoretical and empirical findings of the critical theorists and researchers, especially about the effects of schooling on rural and disadvantaged or poor people, made me want to know about the experience of the *Dalit* community in my country, because their findings did not seem to fit well with my experience and casual observations. The fourth factor then was my personal experience, experience that I have as a village-born and village-educated person, and a village school teacher in a nation of the South; what is my story which led me to this somewhat critical stance towards critical theory? It goes like this.

I was born in a mountain village of eastern Nepal, graduated from a typical rural secondary (high) school, and lived unexposed to modern means of transportation, communication and utilities until I joined college in Kathmandu, the capital city. I did a Bachelor in Education degree there. Through this experience, I was exposed to the modern world–a contrasting world to that of my village. But my financial position did not allow me to enjoy modernity in many respects. I was marginalized by myself, that is, I felt that I could not expect to be successful in the city culture and I decided to work far from the city. Hence I chose to go back to my village as a high school headmaster. During my headmastership, it seemed to me that schooling extended into communities because of the interest and activity of community leaders, political leaders, and religious leaders and I thought that all groups in the community were served by this extension. Personally, I realized that schooling paid me financially, socially, and intellectually. I thought that my schooling also satisfied my parents whose aspirations were that I leave manual work, get some financial earnings each month, have a social reputation, be well dressed, and finally be an ideal man so that they could be proud of me. I thought schooling did the same for all of my colleagues who graduated from village school like me, no matter whether they belonged to a high caste Brahman or a culturally oppressed caste such as the *Dalits* in Nepal, and I thought that success in school depended on a student's desire or motivation to attend school.

After working for three years in the village school, I returned to university in Kathmandu to complete another degree. As a requirement for a Masters degree in Education, I went again to work in a remote rural area school of northern Nepal. Finally, I joined the university as a lecturer. The couple of years teaching experience in university made me once again different from what I had been in my village. The way I dressed, the way I talked, and the way I lived were changed. Now I was a "new man" to my village and an émigré to the modern world. I now wonder about people like those who were my school-mates, but dropped out of school, not attending after primary classes. What have they been thinking about schooling during these years? Do they feel the same as I feel in my life because of schooling or would they have a different story to tell?

The Research Question

I began thinking about my research questions in the early 1980s, right after my appointment to CERID, Tribhuvan University's Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development. My teaching background, my early experience, and my own education helped me to rethink these questions that I had in my mind since my high school graduation, and helped me to realize that a focus on schooling among peoples who tended to do little schooling and to leave schooling at an early stage might be a strategic way to answer my questions. When I entered the field I thought addressing my interest in the relationship of village people to school would be served by focusing on school expansion, how schooling extended itself into the Dalit community and what had happened to Dalit individuals and the community as more and more of them attended school.

However, as the field work proceeded the powerful place of caste in the Dalit's life in the village and their experience with schooling seemed the central issue to explore, rather than schooling expansion itself. Thus I came to reframe my research interest to one of exploring the relationships between a lower caste group (the *Dalits*,) and schools in Nepal, the way that relationship is influenced or shaped by the caste system, and the way both Dalit castes and others understand and explain the relationship.

The Research Site

I focused my research on three 'untouchable' caste groups, the Damai (tailor), Kami (blacksmith) and Sarki (cobbler), in the mid-western region of Nepal and I did my field research in Bungkot, one of the sixty nine Village Development Committees (VDC) of the Gorkha district of western Nepal selecting a *Dalit* community where schooling has been present for more than three decades. Why Bungkot in Gorkha and why not some other village or some other district?

Regarding the ideal study site, Marshall and Rossman (1989:54) argue that it is where entry is possible, where there is a high probability of a rich mix of many of the processes, peoples, programs, interactions or structures of interest, and where the researcher can define an appropriate role and be assured of good sampling. Gorkha district contains many villages which fit all of these criteria.

Many disadvantaged community people such as *Dalit*, Baram, Gurung, Magar, and Tamang call Gorkha district their home. The Gurung, Magar, and Tamang who live in the northern part of the district each have their own language, but Baram, Sarki, Damai, and Kami speak Nepali as their mother tongue. Nepali is a lingua franca for all the people in the district. In the Hindu caste system of classification, the Baram comes under the "touchable" groups while Sarki, Damai, and Kami are regarded as "non-touchable" groups of people, though these days they are constitutionally all equal to other caste groups. These groups of people live in the southern part of the district and have physical access to school as do people who are high caste. It was the *Dalit* community in Bungkot (see Chapter V for community context) where I did my research.

Prior to the selection of Bungkot Village Development Committee (VDC), I consulted Campus Chiefs (principals of colleges) and some professors of Gorkha Education Campus (college) and Drabya Shah Campus, high school headmasters (2), the District Education Officer, high school supervisors (2), and the Area Coordinator of Save the Children (US) in Gorkha for their suggestion as to an appropriate VDC to address my research questions. They, according to my criteria for site selection[3] suggested 17 different VDCs. I wrote the name of each VDC suggested on a small piece of paper, rolled it, put it in a lunch box, spun it, and finally picked out one. The piece of paper which I picked up randomly named Bungkot VDC for my research site. Interestingly, I found later that almost all of the persons had suggested Bungkot VDC as the best place to address my research questions.

Research Methodology

To answer my questions, the study could focus on one community or a number of communities, but I wished to understand the processes as experienced by people. Because

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[3] These criteria were that there must have been schools in the village for at least 20 years, there must have been an expansion of schools from initial primary levels to include secondary levels with class 10 being offered for at least five years, there must be three or four different caste groups, at least one of which would be considered disadvantaged according to governmental documents, there must be a population of about 2000 people or a little more (that is, small enough for me to do community-based study in the time available to me), there must be people who speak Nepali as their mother tongue, and the village must be one which is likely to willingly accept my presence as a researcher.

of the intensive nature of this type of research, and because of the importance of the people's perceptual framework for such a study, qualitative community-based research in a single community (a case study) is required both to limit the size of the task and to facilitate interpretation within a cultural framework. A case study was also appropriate because there had been virtually no study in Nepal on this topic or with this group of people, and I wanted to gather as wide a range of data as possible rather than limit my research to one or two factors.

At the level of method or procedure, a variety of approaches were used to try to understand this one case. I did a chronological overview of the development of education in Nepal to begin to understand the historical factors which operated; available data were gathered on caste and education in Nepal and on the community of Bungkot to gain a better picture of the contemporary situation; experienced senior educators were interviewed for their opinions on schooling in Nepal as it affects this group, and I did a field survey to obtain some further data from Dalits in the village. But primarily I talked with men and women in the Dalit community of Bungkot, so that I could come to understand the way they experienced schooling, how they thought about it, what their experiences had been through the years. That is, since my study primarily explores a community perspective, interprets peoples' knowledge of their lived world, draws on an interpretative literature, and links my experience with the study, I followed critical interpretive field research procedures to gather much of the data, and to analyze and interpret the findings of this study.

Field Approach

Once I decided to go to Bungkot, as is customary for an outsider, I went to the office of the Chief of the District Officer in Gorkha Bazaar, introduced myself, shared my proposal, and asked for his help in Bungkot if I needed it. He assured me of any kind of help which I might require. I then moved to Bungkot on foot with my luggage on my shoulder and my back. On the walk to Bungkot I stopped in a *Chautara* (elevated platform around a tree) at Ahale Bhanjyang for a short rest. There I happened to talk with a resting woman in her late 50's. In our talk, she wanted to know who I was and where I was going.

> Woman:–Where do you go *Babu*(a word to show respect to a male person)?
>
> Myself:I go to Bungkot.
>
> Woman:What do you do there? Maybe you are an officer or a teacher for Bungkot? Or you have relatives there?
>
> Myself:- No, I am not an officer, nor a teacher, nor do I have relatives in Bungkot. But I want to live in a *Dalit* community and learn with them about why they send their children to school and what they get in return.
>
> Woman:- Is this so? I guess you lied to me.

Myself:- No I didn't.

Woman:- I never met such a person in my life who claims that he goes to Bungkot to learn with the people. I don't think village people know much more than you schooled people. You schooled people have to teach them. Maybe you are going to Bungkot to teach villagers. Who knows for sure?

Woman:- By the way, to which caste do you belong?

Myself:- I am Koirala *Bahun* (Brahman). I am from Sindhuli, east of Kathmandu. It's two days walk for me to go to my home from Kathmandu.

Woman:-Okay you go to Bungkot. It takes about three hours for a person like you. But still I think you lied to me about your purpose for going to Bungkot.

After three hours continuous walk I entered Bungkot and went directly to the high school. I introduced myself to the teaching staff and told them of my purpose and my plan to live in Bungkot for two months. Then I asked them to find me a place to live in and a place to dine. Mr. Rishiram Khanal, a teacher, immediately offered help to solve this problem and remained always helpful with other problems that came to me during my stay in Bungkot.

Prior to visiting the *Dalit* community I did a familiarity tour of the village, in order to let Bungkot dwellers know my purpose for coming to this village and to make myself comfortable with the people wherever I met them and I talked with them. First of all, I stopped in the office of the Bungkot VDC, introduced myself, met with the secretary and some of the village representatives available there, shared my proposal, schedule, and approaches to research, and requested their help if I needed it.

Data Gathering

In my first information gathering step, I gathered information about the *Dalit* settlement, their population, and their life style from the office of the Bungkot VDC. Then I made a plan to visit all nine schools in Bungkot; beginning the next day I introduced myself to the teachers, shared my proposal with them, and asked for help if I needed it in the course of my research. Meanwhile I made a list of students including *Dalits* in school, discussed with teachers about *Dalit's* situation in the village and in school, met some of the *Dalit* students of lower secondary and secondary schools, and gathered information from teachers about *Dalit's* life in school. In the third step, I gathered household data from the Dalit families through hiring a research assistant, Chetanath Simkhada, assigning him his job, training him on how to approach a *Dalit* community in order to get their household information and fill out the survey form provided , and working with him until he was confident enough to complete the form independently. In the fourth step I began to visit the *Dalit* community; initially introducing myself and the research goals, getting myself settled

in a place to live (I lived in three different places during my stay in Bungkot), beginning casual visits with people to gather preliminary information, and identifying key people with whom I wanted eventually to have in-depth discussions.

During this visit and for all succeeding visits, I wrote descriptive field notes at the end of each day, keeping these notes separate from my research planning journal, and from a third journal into which I recorded my own thoughts and ideas as the research developed. For example, after my first visit to the *Dalit* community of Bungkot VDC, I wrote out my initial assumptions and subjective reactions (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984) that developed as a result of my reading of the literature. These assumptions and reactions included the ideas that education starts with Brahmans and in Brahman communities, schooling maintains caste cultures, schooling starts with the tile-roofed household and moves to the twig-roofed household even in a *Dalit* community, girls are late comers to school, schooling does not necessarily promote migration, schooling produces a new caste, and schooling fits poorly with community needs.

Throughout my time in the community, I kept an expanded account of each day in my journal, including my reactions to respondents and the feeling I sensed from others as I met with them (Spradley, 1979: 76). Daily or every few days I did what Kirby and McKenna (1989) call a "self interview" to try to become aware of the "conceptual baggage" I was carrying into the situation (the term coined by Judith Golick meaning both intellectual thinking and emotional reactions) and layering (rethinking about this conceptual baggage and developing new perspectives). I also tried to develop a local frame of mind, understanding the situation as it was understood by local people (Spindler & Spindler, 1988; Geertz, 1983:12). As I was beginning to develop an understanding of the way that they thought about schooling, its expansion into their community and how it fit into their lives, I fed my understandings back to people, so that they could tell me if I had fully grasped their world. Similarly, I took photos of the community people by using all the three film making approaches (Sorenson, 1977 cited in Marshall & Rossman, 1989: 86), the opportunity, the programmed, and the digressive (deliberative) approaches to photography. In doing so, I thought that I could learn from people and be taught by people, collecting rich descriptive data about the context, and making inferences from what people said and how they acted. Besides, I thought the photo taking process made me close to the community people since I took photos of males and females, old, youths, and children including the context of their work, promising to give them a copy.

Research Methods and Instruments

In addition to the available data gathered in Kathmandu, from the District Educaton Office, and from Bungkot VDC files, I collected field information using four data-gathering methods, participant observation, group discussion, life history collection, and interviews. Through participant observation, I observed life style, language use and family practices in helping children. I collected narratives from the community people (Kirby & McKenna, 1989: 76), conversed with people and shared my biases (Gibney, 1989: 88), did meticulous eyewitnessing and informal interviewing (Pelto & Pelto, 1981: 69), observed repetitive patterns, and took part in community activity such as going to their work place and passing leisure time together with community people. At the same time I stayed sufficiently detached to observe and analyze the happenings in the community (Merriam, 1988: 94). I maintained a daily diary, reflected on what I observed, and asked myself questions for further observations until I saw a repetitive pattern in what I was seeing and what people were saying to me.

I organized four group discussion sessions during which I both taped and wrote notes with *Dalit* community people in three different locations of Bungkot, namely Wayak, Mailung, and Makaipur. Prior to discussion, I told the group about my objectives for doing the research, assured them of anonymity with respect to information they provided, gave a run-down of the previous discussion(s), and repeated this process in subsequent meetings. Each time, I gathered together a group of only about five people in order to avoid what Morgan (1988) calls "social loafing." I initiated group discussion with unstructured questions and proceeded to concentrate on the main issue (Merton et al., 1990: 16), which was their experience with and thoughts about schooling as it developed in their community. I could not do multi-stage group discussion (Krueger, 1988), in which I would have mixed some of the participants from earlier discussions and added some new participants, partly because of the scattered settlement of the *Dalits* and partly because of the people's heavy involvement in agricultural work in that season. However I was able to contact 47 people comprising those who were and are involved in the development of schooling in Bungkot, and those who had observed the process and were products of schooling in that community, whether they were *Dalits* (22 men and 13 women), social workers, political leaders, students, or silent observers.

Once I knew some of the schooled *Dalits* pretty well, I collected life histories from four, two males and two females, in order to understand what they experienced as the effects of schooling in their life and the community. I discussed with them in a non-directive way (Middleton, 1993: 70), and requested that they write about their life as a *Dalit* in the

village, in school, and after school. From these sources I analyzed their personal history to capture the evolution, find patterns that were linked to their life, understand the significance of those patterns, and come to know their individual reactions to them (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Later I raised further questions with them if I needed more information or further clarification as to what they told me and/or wrote for me. In so doing, I tried to understand what Casey (1993: 24) calls the "objective- subjective, present-past, dominant-commonplace, and individual-social relationship of an individual to a setting." There was almost nothing available in the form of written documentation on these people's lives, so I relied primarily on these interviews, our discussions, and their writings about themselves.

Finally, I taped interviews with policy level personnel (four males) in Kathmandu for two purposes. One, I wanted to understand how they saw the expansion and development of schooling in Nepal and what they believed had been its effects on Nepali society,and communities, especially the *Dalit* groups of people. Two, I was interested in cross checking my micro level findings with the macro perspective of the policy level people on the same issue. When I finished my interviews with them I shared my field findings and received their reactions as a wrap up session to our interviews.

Data Validation Technique

Though validity and reliability are terms which do not fit well with this type of qualitative interpretative research (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Merriam, 1988), I tried to ensure internal validity of this research by triangulation, by repeated observation of the same phenomena, by clarifying my biases (Merriam, 1988), by providing my perspectives rather than truth, and by doing empirical assessment of the community people rather than giving generalizations (Patton, cited in Merriam, 1986: 174). Similarly, I tried to ensure external validity of my research by a random selection (Merriam, 1988) of one of the *Dalit* communities in Gorkha i. e. the *Dalit* community of Bungkot VDC from among the communities which met my criteria for the research work. Moreover I followed Maxwell's (1992) categories for validity of this research; she claimed descriptive validity in qualitative research like this occurs through describing my (the researcher's) primary understanding, interpretive validity by interpreting the participant's perspective and checking it with them, theoretical validity by providing explanations of what I understood and what I interpreted, generalization by generalizing the findings only within the observed *Dalit* community itself as an internal generability, and evaluative validity by being critical of community members' understanding of the happenings.

Regarding the reliability of this research, I ensured consistency and dependability of the collected data by describing my position and the context of the data collection, by

describing how the data were collected, discussions were held, and inquiries were made (Merriam, 1988), by triangulating data gathered from different instruments (Denzin, 1994), and by comparing my observations with what the *Dalit* community of Bungkot VDC said to me (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Data Analysis and Interpretation

My attempt to address my research questions drew on structural theory which enabled me to address the influence of the larger (or macro) economic, social and political processes in shaping events related to the development of schooling within a single community; symbolic interactionism which permitted me to explore the way that people interpret their world, negotiate the meaning system of that world, and then make decisions within it; and finally drew on critical theory as exemplified in the work of Paulo Freire which enabled me to query the possibility of interpreting their reality in ways other than those which the people themselves practice. My intention to do this critical interpretive research, following Fay (1975), was to discover the community people's experiences with schooling, to find out the set of rules which shapes their views, and to elucidate the meanings which inform their social practice about schooling. So, within the community, I discussed, asked questions, and observed for changes at the economic, political, cultural, and social level which could be attributed to schooling, although I did not expect to be able to know in a definite way whether or not they have been shaped by schooling alone.

In order to analyze and interpret data, I generated inferences from the collected data by developing themes, and analyzing information (Spindler & Spindler, 1987: 31), and presenting the participant's perspective through use of a carefully structured reporting framework (Marshall & Rossman, 1989), supplied some direct quotations from group discussions and interviews (Morgan, 1988: 66), examined issues, described them carefully and reformulated them as appropriate, explained their implications in an orderly way (Geertz, 1983: 15), and did "one day of analyzing and writing for everyday spent in the field" (Rosalie Wax's, 1971 cited in Wolcott, 1980). Thus, in the field data chapter of this thesis, I provide a thick description of this research context, generate themes, raise issues, include selected quotations relevant to themes and issues, provide respondents' perspective, note connections with world literature, and interpret where schooling fits into the lives of the Dalits of Bungkot VDC.

Limitations and Delimitations

This study focused solely on formal education or schooling, although nonformal and adult education programs are an integral part of village education in Nepal. Because it was a case

study of a single *Dalit* community of a single district in the hilly area of Nepal, widespread generalizations should not be made from it, but it can be expected that there will be re-occurrence of similar responses in a similar context to this research and with a researcher with a background similar to mine. Finally, the study does not rely on a theoretical beginning place, but searches for the meanings and experience of the *Dalit* community attached to schooling. This may be considered a limitation although a theoretical literature is brought to bear on the research after the data were gathered.

Ethical Questions

There were some ethical questions for this research. These included whether or not audio taping of field interviews and discussions would be acceptable to *Dalit* community people, whether or not I should share with others individuals' perceptions collected by the researcher (Morgan, 1988: 40), whether or not to identify the respondents by name, location, and experience or anything else which could identify them to a reader (Kirby & McKenna, 1989: 118), and in what sense I could or should pass personal judgment on the situation in this village based upon my personal cultural context i.e. that of a Nepali speaking Brahman by birth who shares "main stream" Nepali culture (Marshall & Rossman, 1989: 72). In order to address these ethical questions, I asked respondents about all of the issues and followed the instructions which they gave to me. However, many times I found difficulty in maintaining anonymity of the information in the culture of Bungkot.

> Rita:-where did you go at Mailung sir? I mean whose house?
>
> Myself:- who told you I was there in Mailung?
>
> Rita:- A woman worker came to me and told me that she met you on the way to Mailung.
>
> Myself:- Oh.
>
> Rita:- Tell me sir who did you talk to and what was the talk?
>
> Myself:- It is confidential. I do not talk about the people I interview.
>
> **The Next Day**
>
> Subhadra:-Oh sister (talking with Rita about my Mailung visit) do you know that person from Sindhuli who came here for his research?
>
> Rita:- Yes I do.
>
> Subhadra:-He came to my village Mailung. He gathered people. We were five in the gathering (she named all the people). After he told his purpose for our gathering, he told us he will keep our information secret. Then he asked us what a schooled person did to you and your community. We told him every thing (she begins to describe in detail my discussion with her group).

Fortunately I was there inside the room when this conversation occurred since it was at one of the tea-stalls where I used to go for refreshment. When Subhadra went out, Rita came to me with a smile. She said to me:

> Now you know sir, nothing is secret in this village. You know a husband and a wife copulate secretly, but we can see the result within four months. People begin to say that she is pregnant now. Don't you think their copulation is no more a secret? The same is so for your secrecy, because you tried to hide from me the report of your discussion in Mailung. But you know sir, your respondent told me everything. You were here in the room. Isn't it so sir? (Date of Discussion:-15-2-2052 VS or 29 May 1995).

Despite these difficulties, I tried to maintain anonymity on my side. In order to do that when speaking of or writing of the ideas I changed the context of the discussion sometimes and at other times I shared the idea but did not name the person who expressed it, where I gathered that idea, or when I collected these types of ideas or experiences.

Summary

This study explores the relationships between untouchable caste groups (*Dalits*) and schools in Nepal, the way that relationship is influenced or shaped by the caste system, and the way both *Dalit* castes and others understand and explain the relationship. In order to address these questions, I did qualitative interpretative research living in a village, Bungkot, Gorkha for two months focusing on Damai, Kami, and Sarki castes of the *Dalit* community. I gathered data using participant observation, group discussion, life histories, and individual interviews as research tools, as well as gathering available data from diverse official sources and published documents, and household data through a household questionnaire. To draw inferences from these data about my research question, I rely primarily on a critical interpretative tradition, following a structural analysis and a symbolic interaction type of interpretation of individual interview data.

Chapter IV
History of Educational Development in Nepal

Development of Schooling in Nepal to 1950

It is said that in ancient Nepal the concept of schooling originated among high caste Hindu people, the Brahmans. Sanskrit, a language of the elites, was the medium of instruction. Using Basil Bernstein's phrasing (1977) Brahmans generated, distributed and controlled knowledge for each caste of the people through their rituals and ceremonies. However literally, anybody can be a Brahman when he or she possesses eternal knowledge on Brahma (the cosmogenic cycle) so on this ground, one can argue that the knowledge gained by a group of people made them different from others and hence they called themselves Brahman. Whatever may be the reasons for being a Brahman, the hard fact was that these knowledgeable people did not organize advocacy campaigns for people's education, did not encourage social movements, and did not encourage people to think of education as their basic right. The result of this situation was that schooling was confined to high caste families by producing what Bourdieu (1990) calls cultural capital for them. Dalits were then excluded from formal schooling for centuries and not given an opportunity to make education their cultural capital, or use education to transform their knowledge into cultural capital. If some Dalits were able to somehow acquire schooling, they were still kept in low status positions which resembles what Ogbu (1986) calls a job ceiling for these people.

The Buddhist religion, on the other hand, ignored the caste distinction in education, encouraged women of the aristocratic circle to obtain education, and instructed people in the Pali language rather than Sanskrit. Buddhists made temples and monasteries to school children and *Gurus*, the spiritual directors to guide life, served as teachers there (Joshi, 1982; Wood, 1965). This made schooling accessible to at least some more people in comparison with the Hindu schooling system, but the socio-political dynamics were such that the culturally oppressed people such as the *Dalit* were not able to access schooling. Despite all these efforts to educate people, education in ancient Nepal became a perogative of higher caste people (Bista, 1992; Caplan, 1975) and the extended family was the chief educating agent for the common people such as *Dalits* (Reed & Reed, 1968).

Contemporary Nepal, or Nepal somewhat as we know it today, appeared on the political map of South Asia in the middle of the fifth century under the rule of the Lichhivi dynasty and Kathmandu, the capital city, dominated its history (Amatya, 1983; Rose & Scholtz, 1980). The Lichhivi rulers (250–878) paid little attention to people's education and education of the common people was seen as an extra burden for them (Sharma, 1986)

though they were popular for their cultural and architectural advancement. The succeeding regime, the Malla dynasty (879–1768) showed an interest in educating people, but through their education system they were able to reach only the high class people, who were the ruling class family and families of the traditional priests or *Pundits* (Joshi, 1982). In general the divided Nepal with more than 48 principalities, concentrated heavily on wars (from the 5th to the 18th century) and gave little attention to the development of schooling. The rise of Prithvi Narayan Shah, (1769-1831), a king of Gorkha, changed the political map of Nepal by unifying all the principalities which were at that time reigned by kings of different dynasties. Prithvi Narayan took onto the state responsibility for schooling the children of soldiers who lost their lives in wars but his heirs ignored the importance of state responsibility in schooling children (Wood, 1965: 9).

Prithvi Narayan's dynasty carried on after his death but a powerful prime minister, Jung Bahadur Rana, instituted a rule of family premiership in 1846. This period of history became known as Ranaism, or Rana family rule, in which the king was a figurehead rather than a ruler. Jung Bahadur introduced "western-type" schooling after a visit to England in 1854, for children of the extended Rana family and the children of the Royal family. Building on this model, formal primary education for girls began in 1923 (in Dhokatol, Kathmandu) and higher education (Tri-Chandra Collage) for boys in 1938. Only one woman, namely Sabina Kumari, appplied for the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) in 1934 and not a single woman applied for college education before 1947 (Sharma, 1986). However some people were attracted to English schooling because (a)they had a profound hope that schooling would result in freedom from Ranaism even as East Indians got freedom from British rule in 1947, (b)retired army personnel from the British Gorkha Regiment recognized the importance of schooling, (c)the *Prabasi* Nepali (Nepali living in India) advocated the need of schooling through songs and poems, (d)the rich and schooled Nepali in India felt humiliatied by their illiterate communities at home and hence were active in making their community people literate, and (e)the common people found that a schooled person had a social reputation as well as money.

Not only was schooling in Nepal a foreign institution from its beginning, but in addition the regime commonly known as the Rana regime (1846-1950) considered schooling a threat to government, and hence opposed mass schooling and gradually increased illiteracy in the country (Uprety, 1962; Aryal, 1970; Shrestha, 1982). How to pursuade the Rana government to provide or permit people's education, and how to ensure schooling for the masses were the educational issues for this time period. It is not surprising then that Daniel Wright, writing about the number of schools in Nepal before 1951 would state "The

subjects of schools and colleges in Nepal may be treated as snakes in Ireland, there are none" (cited in Rongong, 1982: 158). But the record shows that there were in fact a handful of schools and students[1] although about 98% of the then 8.2 million people of Nepal were illiterate[2] in 1951 (Nepal: Ministry of Education, 1970). In this situation, one could easily guess that there were likely less than 100 *Dalits* who were fortunate enough to be literate during this period.

Summing up the development of schooling in Nepal before 1950, it can be said that schooling in Nepal was at the mercy of *Gurus* in the indigenous period, an area not thought about in divided Nepal, and a neglected area in warring Nepal (1779 -1846). After that, Nepal followed the path of many other countries of the world, introducing in 1854 what is now understood as a "western type" of formal education which was made accessible to the public by one of the rulers between 1898 and 1900, Deva Shumsher. The language used as a medium of instruction for this western type of education was English. That is, like Hindu and Buddhist schooling before it the language used was not the language of the common people and this schooling too was an alien institution to the common people of Nepal. Thus schooling remained always a foreign creation to Nepali from the indigenous period to the early twentieth century and in both ancient and medieval Nepal schooling was a perogative of the high caste people rather than a right of the common people such as *Dalits*. Even when an enlightened ruler offered schooling for orphans of soldiers, the opportunity was soon blocked so none could study, though some Dalit fathers were soldiers in Prithvi Narayan Shah's army for the expansion of state (Baral, 1993: 347).

Strategies and Issues for the Development of Schooling after 1951

In 1951, a violent revolution overthrew the Rana regime and established a democratic parliamentary form of government in Nepal. Self-motivated people opened schools, and some politicians persuaded the government to provide assistance to such people. Consequently, the number of schools grew as mushrooms in summer, but the growth was unplanned and not widely or evenly distributed throughout the country. In order to expand schooling in a planned way, the government appointed a Nepal National Education

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[1] The 1970 document reports that in 1951 there were 321 primary schools, 11 high schools, and 2 colleges with 8505 primary school students, 1680 high school students, and 250 college students but Sharma (1986) lists the names of 27 high schools, 11 in Kathmandu valley, 8 on the Southern Plain bordering India, 3 in the Eastern mountains, and 5 in the Western mountains of Nepal.

[2] The implication here is that they were illiterate in Nepali. However, they could be literate in some other language: of the languages spoken in Nepal, Nepali, Newari, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Tamang, Gurung, Magar, Abadhi, Rai/Kirati, and Sherpa as well as European languages other than English have well established orthographies and historic literatures.

Commission in 1954 that prepared national education policies and programs, formulated a grants-in-aid policy, developed a scheme to prepare teachers to work in rural areas, provided guidelines to develop textbooks in the country, and recommended at least one high school in each of 108 electoral constituencies. Consequently, by 1960, with the Nepali population increased by 10% to 9.4 million, there was a major increase in schools; 4000 primary schools with 2,000,000 students, 156 high schools with 21,000 students and 33 colleges with 5,143 students. But there was no concerted effort to expand schooling for the *Dalit* community as such since only influential people were active in expanding school in their communities; however many *Dalits* started to go to school since some schools were accessible to them and the teachers were tolerant on the issue of the caste system, at least in school.

Nepal underwent another major political change in 1961, a change in which the king banned political parties, dissolved parliament, imprisoned party leaders, and controlled political activities under what Shah (1975:6) calls "tutelary democracy, a Panchayat system, an age old tradition of unquestioned obedience to autocratic authority of any kind." However, this political change did not slow the rate of schooling expansion, as the king immediately initiated plans for further change and development. He appointed members to an All Round National Education Committee (1961), invited the Unesco team of Wood and Knall (1962) to Nepal to advise on educational development, and in 1970 introduced a National Education System Plan to produce graduates loyal to the king, country, and the newly introduced Panchayat political system (Nepal: Ministry of Education, 1970: 9). This plan introduced a one teacher school for remote rural areas, at least one school in each Village Panchayat (the first level or smallest level political unit), mobile training camps for teacher training, resource collection for the school(s) in a Village Panchayat , a preferential treatment policy for girls and women's education, a vocationally oriented school system, multipurpose high schools, a nonformal education program for out of school children, experimental free and compulsory schooling in the three districts of Jhapa, Palpa, and Chitawan (out of 75 districts in the country), and one hundred percent financial support for primary schools, seventy five percent for lower secondary schools consisting of grades IV-VII, fifty percent for secondary schools (class VIII-X), and a grants-in-aid policy for university education.

At the end of this regime in 1990, there were 18,694 primary schools, 6124 secondary level schools (4045 lower secondary schools and 2079 secondary schools), and 150 or more constituent colleges under three universities, the Mahendra Sanskrit University, Tribhuvan University, and Kathmandu University (see Table 1). Tribhuvan University

was the major post-secondary institute, providing three levels of post-secondary education to over 98% of university students enrolled in the country (proficiency or "intermediate" certificates for the first two years, "diplomas" which are now called Bachelor's degrees for the second two years, and Master's degrees for the final two years). However *Dalits* as a socially oppressed group received no special attention to school their children. A token quota for college admission and freeships for a few were the only approaches to encourage *Dalit* schooling during this period. Nevertheless the educational policy of this regime to expand school in each ward of a village development committee helped a lot to ensure growing numbers of *Dalit* children in school.

Both the revolutionary government and enthusiastic people put considerable effort into creating schools in villages since 1950 and the Panchayat regime, throughout its period in power(1960–1990), made a continuous effort to expand schooling throughout the country. But in the first decade (1960-1970), the Panchayat regime encouraged people to open schools wheras later it changed to a policy of nationalized schools under the National Education System Plan. One result of the nationalization effort was a dramatic decline of people's participation in education, and a rise of bureaucratic mentality among teachers. Nevertheless, by the end of the regime schooling had expanded to every village in Nepal, from the most urban to the most isolated. From 1981 to 1988 participation in primary education increased from 36.5% to 58.1% for girls and from 92.9% to 113.4% for boys (See table 2). However because of the then national policy in regards to caste based information, one can not find the number of *Dalits* in school. For the first time in the history of Nepal the government included castewise information on schooling in the 1990 census.

Thus, from the first democratic regime in 1951 until the return to a parliamentary system of government in Nepal in 1990 there has been a constant and rapid expansion of schooling in Nepal. This expansion is summarized in the following two tables:

Table 1: Expansion of Schooling in Nepal, 1951 to 1990 (Nepali date 2007–2047 VS)

	Primary		Lower Secondary		Secondary		University	
Date	Schools	Pupils	Schools	Pupils	Schools	Pupils	Schools	Pupils
1951	321	8505	11	1680			2	250
1961	4001	182533			156	21115	33	5143
1971	7256	449141		120537	1065	102704	49	17200
1981	10912	1474698	2964	198723	1031	170404	101	60296
1991	18694	2884275	4045	378378	2079	395330	206	110239

Table 2: Approximate School Participation in Nepal, by Gender, Level, and Year

	Primary			Lower Secondary			Secondary			University		
Date	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1951			1			19*			20			
1961			16			12*			24			
1971	35	7	32			23*	15.4	3.4	9.9			
1981	93	36	65		20	12	30.4	8.6	20.3		19*	22*
1991	101	73	106		27	40	47.4	22.7	35.8		24*	

Note: the blank cells in the tables 1 and 2 indicate that the figures are not available.
Data sources: 1971 census data, Nepal: MOEC & US AID, 1988:4-13; Nepal: MOEC, 1981 and 1988 data, Nepal: MOEC, 1991:129. The astericked data is from this 1991 source and it is not possible to determine the basis for the numbers. They may be transition rates from the previous level, not participation rates.

The people's movement in Nepal reinstalled a parliamentary political system in 1990, the system that was initially instituted in 1951 and replaced by the panchayat system in 1961. In order to respond to the educational aspirations of people, right after the political change the 1990 National Education Commission recommended some policy strategies for further expansion of schooling in Nepal. They included the continuation of a preferential treatment policy for the education of girls, women and other disadvantaged people[3] in Nepal, the

[3] A World Bank (1994: 39) report shows that Brahman, Kshatriya and Newar are educationally advantaged groups of people in Nepal.

extension of free schooling facilities from primary schools to include grades VI to X, a compulsory minimum of at least one women teacher in all primary schools, encouragement for private schools and private universities in addition to the state (public) institutions, and legal right for mother tongue teaching in primary schools (Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 1990. Part 3, Fundamental right section, article 18.2).

Given the short time in which the democratic government has been in power, it is still difficult to know what effect their changes will have on the continuing development of schooling in Nepal. However, it is known that many of the children of ethnic minorities, girls, children of *Dalit* communities, and the children of the remote rural areas are yet unschooled. The majority of the schooled children withdraw from schooling prior to completion of primary school and many of those who complete are likely to become an unemployed labour force (Nepal: National Education Commission, 1992; CERID, 1991).

What were the forces behind the development and expansion of schooling during this time period in Nepal? Personal interest of parents and children, contemporary needs, national interest, and international forces all worked together to foster it. The Rana prime ministers of an earlier time responded partly to similar pressures but also had different motives for introducing and minimally expanding schooling. They wanted to educate their children in schooling of the western type, to prepare people who could function as intermediaries between British India and the rest of the Nepali population, to produce "their type" of administrators in the country, to send literate youth to join the British 'Gurkha' Army, and to eliminate political turmoil against their regime (Pandey, 1987; Shrestha, 1982; Joshi, 1982; Wood, 1965).

But there were other, more local, reasons for schooling to extend outside the Kathmandu valley. For example, in Nepalguanj an English school was established in 1928 to calm down the dispute between Nepali and Indian students who were studying in Rupaidiha (an Indian town bordering Nepal to the south) while in 1940 there was another English school in Siraha, also a district of Nepal adjoining the Indian border, to enable people to protect themselves from railway cheaters in India (Sharma, 1986: 84 & 85). The Panchayat regime which reigned between the two democratic periods also sought to expand schooling in Nepal to produce skilled labor that would support the Panchayati regime (Nepal: Ministry of Education, 1970; Shah, 1975).

The first democratic regime of 1951 had yet other motives to develop and extend schooling to a wider population. Right after the establishment of democratic government in the country they felt a need to respond to the people's heightened expectations in relation to schooling, and political parties had a commitment to the development of Nepal through

schooling (Uprety, 1962). Paradoxically, the Panchayat regime had a relatively wider contact with the outside world than the democratic regimes. Consequently, this regime increased schools in the country to meet the recommendation of the Unesco held Karachi conference and the ministerial conference in Japan in 1961, and of other Unesco conference in Bangkok (1965), Singapore (1971), and Colombo (1978), in which Asian nations including Nepal expressed a commitment to eradicate illiteracy by 1980 under the Asian model for schooling (Singh, 1986). The Jomtien conference in Thailand (1990) for the eradication of illiteracy in Asian nations also gave impetus to further expand schooling in Nepal. Currently, motivation to expand schooling at the national level comes from commitments the political parties have made to people.

Some of the Nepali educationists, in an interview with me, reviewed the forces for the expansion of schooling in Nepal. As they concluded, popular demand of the certain section of the people, political liberalization, government's as well as intellectual's belief in modernization through education, a schooled person's interest to obtain employment in village or town or city, international help for education, and government's growing concern for the egalitarian approach to education were the potential forces driving the expansion of schooling in Nepal. Similar reasons are put forward in the Master Plan Team for Basic and Primary Education (Nepal: Ministry of Education and Culture, 1991:126), as it mentions that trust in education as a means of social mobility, exposure of Nepali to the rest of the world, faith in the human resource development theory of education to train people for change and development, and the state's belief in education as a "safe" strategy to appease restive people were the main reasons behind the expansion of schooling in the last forty years in Nepal. But given this historical development and extension of schooling throughout the Kingdom of Nepal, what is the history of schooling for Dalits?

Features of School for *Dalits* in a Caste System

Being a Hindu Kingdom, Nepal had a *Varnashram* based school for a long time during the Vedic period when this country was commonly known as *Satyawati*, a land of truth; *Tapovan*, a land of meditation in Ramayan period; and *Muktisopan*, a ladder to salvation or *Nirvana* in Mahabharat Period (2800-900 BC). In the *Varnashram* based school, each *Varna* was supposed to have its own school to attend and its own duty to cultivate from schooling. But a careful analysis of *Varnashram* duty shows a deliberate denial of schooling to *Sudra*, especially pani**na**chalne and chhunanan**a**hune groups because of their prescribed duty, service to people of other castes. Dharma Vir (1988:54) based on his research done in Kaski, Tansen, and Rupandehi districts of Nepal highlights the reason a particular *Varna* is schooled, but does not so much as mention the Sudras.

> For Brahmans, formal schooling was regarded as a religious necessity because they had to read and preach the religious text. The Kshatriya had to learn to rule and get acquainted with various weapons, state crafts and organizational matters, and schooling for this purpose was considered helpful. The Vaishya required schooling for learning arithmetic in order to transact business, keep records and maintain accounts.

Though *Varnashram* based schooling system did not recognize the importance of education for *Sudra*, the system paradoxically entrusted to them responsibility to continue socially valuable trades such as sewing, shoemaking, and blacksmithing through what Pandey (1987) calls *Pindhi Shiksha (*schooling at the workplace or on the verandah of a family for its children).

A monastery based school appeared with the preaching of Buddha who was born in Lumbini, Nepal. This school was relatively liberal compared to *Varnashram* based school in the sense that there were pupils from different caste groups, but there is no evidence that there were *Dalit* students in these monasteries. Similarly little is known about the schooling system of Nepal during the reign of Mahishpal as well as Gopal dynasty (before 2000 BC), and Kirat dynasty (1600-700 BC) who ruled the country for a long time(Jha, 1987: 15). But the Lichhivi dynasty (250-875) revamped the *Varnashram* based schooling system and had schools for major religious groups such as Buddhists, Vaishnav, and Shaiva. These schools were supported by the income from *Agrahar* i.e. arable land donated for the promotion of schooling. Besides, there were some temples and monasteries that were made responsible for the training of trades people (Jha, 1987:15-16; Baral, 1993: 237; Nepal: Royal Educational Commission, 1983; Nepal National Education Planning Commission, 1956), but there is no evidence, at least to my knowledge, whether a *Paninachalne tatha Chunanahune Sudra* was ever allowed to join in this trade training.

For centuries, the state paid little attention to provide mass education outside the *Varnashram* system and the *Varnashram* system never encouraged a *Dalit* to study. It was only after the expansion of English education and the establishment of the democratic government in the country, that some Sudra[4] joined in Darbar High School. However in the late 1940's, outrage was expressed against their presence by the *Tagadhari* group, a group of Brahman and Kshatriya who are supposed to wear the sacred thread (Sharma, 1986). Similar cases occurred even in the early 1950's. During the course of my interview with him for this research, a former Vice-Chancellor to Tribhuwan University, an

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[4] There is nothing mentioned in available literature on whether they were *Panichalne* or a *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudra*.

emminent scholar, and a former member of National Education Commission, gave a picture of a *Dalit's* life in school in the early 1950s at Pokhara in Western Nepal .

> In Pokhara, we became able to bring some of the *Dalits* children into school. When they came to school, the high caste people refused to sit with the *Dalit* children and to drink water from the same pot. So we decided to let the *Dalits* have their own mats to sit on and a separate pot to drink water. Our intention at that time was to create popular demand for education even in the *Dalit* community...anyway we did it, no matter whether it was the wrong or right approach. Again we thought that these *Dalits* needed schooling in order to improve their socio-economic status. (Date of Interview: 2-4-2052 VS or 18 July 1995)

Dalits in Nepal never had a written tradition. According to J. P. Naik (1980), even in India, the *Dalit* community was educated for the first time in the 1850's by Christian Missionaries, partly in the hope of coverting them to Christianity. But in Nepal, although Missionaries attempted thrice to come into the country during the 7th, 8th, and 18th century they were not successful. Only once was a Roman Catholic Mission able to obtain state sanction to practice their religion, during the reign of Pratap Malla (1641–1674) who wished to develop religious harmony. At that time, there were some Nepali who accepted Christianity but they were driven away from the country or forbidden to practice their religion by succeeding regimes. Thus, the possibility of Christian missionaries providing education to Dalits was blocked because the Nepali government did not allow them to come and work in Nepal. In 1952, Missionaries succeeded in entering Nepal but they did not initiate educational programs that were directly addressed to *Dalit* communities, nor are there any such programs in these days.

Thus the only form of education potentially available to *Dalits* was Hindu religious knowledge, but they were explicitly denied access to knowledge from Hindu literature, the Ved, six schools of philosophy,[5] *Brahman, Upanishad,* Smriti,[6] *Kalpa*, and *Puran.*[7] They were debarred even from touching these books, reading these books, or listening to some one who was reading these books. This restriction was monitored by Prashat's rule in the ancient period, by Bhattarak[8] during the reign of Lichhivi dynasty, by the order of the head of the state in the medieval period to Rana regime, and by the followers of unquestionable *Sanatan* tradition in these days. Thus the *Dalits* could get no place in traditional schools to be literate, could not gain access to Christian schools as happened in other South Asian

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[5] *Purva Mimamsa, Uttar Mimamsa, Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya,* and *Vaisheshika.*

[6] Comments by a holy person upon the eternal truth.

[7] Narratives or religious historical work.

[8] A person placed in-charge of maintaining caste culture.

countries, nor could they develop their own system of learning to be literate. As a result, the *Dalit* groups of people in Nepal remained illiterate for centuries.

Outside their own family settings, *Dalits* learnt to maintain caste hierarchy, the theory of pollution and purity, and the approaches needed to digest social hate as a gift to their womb. The few fortunate schooled *Dalits* as well as "sensitive elites" organized social movements[9] to overthrow the yoke of castism or they accepted their lot as a *Dalit*. On the other side of the coin, the "intellectuals" of the high caste people interpreted the Hindu literature in such a way that the *Dalits* could find no concrete evidence to stand against caste oppression even if some fortunate *Dalit* could read that literature. If there was any evidence[10] it was either ignored or interpreted in such a way that the behaviour would not apply to high caste people; for example, since Lord Rama and Lord Buddha are almighty they can touch and even dine with *Dalit* but a high caste person can do neither.[11] Again the high caste "intellectuals," to some extent, could maintain a literate culture as a cultural capital solely for them, in their homes and through continued traditional schools in order to ensure social prestige, power, and respect from the rest of the society.[12]

The "sensitive elites" such as King Rana Bahadur Shah (1778-1798) who ventured to overthrow the caste restriction in Nepal by following a Hindu religious tradition called *Josmani Santa Parampara* were either ignored, discouraged, made outcast, or penalized. Influential people of Rana Bahadur's time could even prove him a mad king so his idea of caste equality could not survive. Both the traditionally schooled people and *Varnashram* based Nepali schooling system were reluctant to educate *Dalits*. They did not facilitate social mobility but maintained the socio-religious status quo (Ezewn, 1992:22). The

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[9] This movement is similar to the anti-untouchability movement in India. Ghanashyam Shah (1980) classifies the Indian movement in two forms: reformative and alternative. The reformative movement had three traditions: Bhakti, Neo-Vedantic, and Sanskritization. *Bhakti* is a dedication movement. Neo-Vedantic is a movement to reinterpret the religious text. Sanskritization is a movement to be cultured by following what the high caste people do to be called high caste. Besides, there was another movement which was called an alternative movement. This movement had two paths: conversion, and a religious or secular movement.

[10] Lord Rama embraced *Nishad*, a man of *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Jat* and ate *Jutho* (the left over) of *Sabari*, a woman who also belongs to the similar caste to *Nishad*. Similarly, Lord Buddha ate pudding from a *Bhangi* girl, Sujata who was considered as a person of *Paninachalne tatha Chhununahune* caste.

[11] This, I would argue, was an unfair interpretation of the Hindu literature by the traditional "intellectuals" to reinforce caste inequality, to support the theory of genetic pollution and purity, and to cultivate a fatalistic attitude among *Dalits*.

[12] Lord Buddha's social movement was a challenge to the existing Brahmanic values and social practices including the caste system. Instead of accepting Buddha's spirit to humanity, some people who found it to their advantage were able to introduce the caste system even in the Buddhist culture.

western schooling system, on the other hand, proved a blow against the rigid caste structure and social hierarchy, a way to develop confidence in *Dalit* and a means to prepare sensitive elites to interpret the caste culture differently (Srinivas, 1977:71). Prior to its introduction, for centuries schooling for *Dalits* in Nepal was an unnecessary idea from the point of Hindu "intellectuals," an unthought or ignored idea from the point of "sensitive elites" and an impossible dream for the *Dalits* themselves.

During the field research for this work, I found that Bungkot dwellers were familiar with the difference between the traditional and western schooling system. In a discussion with the members of the Village Development Committee (VDC), a member named Iswar pointed out the difference.

> I think there is a difference between current education and the education in the past. In the past, our schooling promoted the caste culture and now education and politics discourage the caste culture. So, to me, this English education helps erode caste culture in our VDC and eventually in Nepal. It is for sure(Date of Discussion:- 6-3-2052 VS or 20 June, 1995).

This was not only the observation of a Bungkot dweller but also an observation of an educational planner, a former Vice Chancellor of Tribhuvan University who served the country for more than four decades in education.

> I'll tell you, Sanskrit education that we had in the past not only oriented students for caste culture but reinforced it for a long time. So we were encouraged to live in social separation and maintain caste identity. To this day we are shaped that way. But the introduction of English schooling cultivated a different culture. It, knowingly and unknowingly, promoted the culture of caste integration and gender integration. You can see the touchable and non-touchable caste sitting on the same bench today and learning the same lesson with the same teacher. The same is the case with the male and female no matter to which caste they belong. Such things were not possible in the Sanskrit education that we had in the past. (Date of interview: 2-4-2052 VS or 18 July 1995)

Summary

With a long history of schooling in Nepal, it must be recognized that traditional schooling in Nepal was religious and not universal. *Varnashram* and monastery based schools which existed for centuries, never gave *Dalits* or many other peoples in the country a chance to go to school. The western type of school and the political openness of the country after 1950, gave them access to formal education for the first time in their life. But again, the high caste people holding onto tradition, resisted *Dalit's* admission to school. Now the resistance of the high caste people against *Dalits* in school is almost gone and yet the legacy of the old caste culture continues to exist. Although there are schools in almost all of the villages of Nepal and among almost all groups of people including *Dalits*, the way that

schooling is experienced by Dalits, how it fits into their lives, is not discussed in the literature. Before turning to that issue, the next chapter will describe in detail the Bungkot community, its educational history and the economic and caste structure of the village.

Chapter V
Bungkot Community and Schooling

Bungkot, one of the 69 Village Development Committees (VDC) in Gorkha district, represents a mid hill settlement of that district, a three to four hour walk to the east from district headquarters, Gorkha Bazaar. History shows that people began to settle in Gorkha in the tenth century, during the Lichhivi era, when it was a centrally governed place known as Janapad (Regmi, 1982: 39). There are three possible origins of the district's name. It may have got its name during the reign of Drabya Shah (1559-1570) by following the name of a God, Gorakhnath (Sharma, 1975:5), or it may have been a Kharka, a grazing land, and the word Kharka changed to Gorkha in due course of time. Others argue that Gorkha was named after the king of the Nagaraj dynasty; the place reigned by Nagaraj was given Nagarcha as its name. The last word Garcha sounded like Gorkha (Shrestha, 1987). Local people are not sure when people began to settle in Bungkot, but they believe the name Bungkot means Bangokot, with bango meaning curved and Kot meaning a fort at the top of a mountain. Others believe that Bungkot was once a Budhakot, a Kot reigned by a Budha (old) Thakuri, a ruling dynasty, but is now a Bungkot. Thus historically, Bungkot would have been somewhat like a feudal kingdom ruled by a Thakuri,[1] or "King."

One enters the VDC on a dusty road from the west, in my case by foot but two or three vehicles make the trip each week especially in winter. In the rainy season however the mountain track is slippery and so treacherous as to be impassable. Within about one kilometer of passing the boundary between Namjung VDC and Bungkot VDC the crests and valleys of almost all of Bungkot become visible.

The road continues east along the top of a central ridge, with terraced farm lands stretching down as much as 1000 feet to the left and right. The village Development Committee office is found among the first cluster of buildings called Khabdi Bhangyang (a "*Tola*", sometimes translated as settlement, sometimes as village); near it is a rice grinding mill, a woman's building at which various classes for women are offered, and a half dozen "street level" open shops in front of people's homes. Thus, this *Tola* is both a cluster of households and a small service centre for the whole VDC.

One can see some distance in almost all directions from this point. In the distance the ridge carries to the south with three other *Tolas* Pokhari Danda, Lakhedanda, and Kaule, at which there are schools named Chandika Primary School and Lakhan Thapa Primary

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[1] The Nepali word Thakuri translates either as dynasty or king in English, depending on the context.

School. Right across from this school to the south-west there is a large Magar village called Maskichhap and a *Dalit's* village Wayak. Below, in the valley to the south, there is Shahid Smrit Secondary School and on another small ridge to the north of it is the health centre and veterinary clinic. Along another crest to north-west is the *Tola* Makaipur and school called Makaipur Primary School. Walking further east along the roadway, one can see small cluster of buildings below representing other *Tolas* such as Chhapthok, Gairigaun, and Mailung (there are 39 *Tolas* in Bungkot VDC). Some of these can be reached by vehicle (especially in winter) before the road dies at Kuwapani *Tola*; to reach others one clambers down barely visible paths among the terraces.

Before school opens each Sunday to Friday morning, and after it closes these afternoons, this roadway is busy with children from pre-school to high-school ages walking to and from school. Some will be in school uniforms, a navy blue skirt and white shirt for girls and navy blue pants and a white shirt for boys, but many are not. Saturday is a quiter day with all government offices and schools closed.

Houses in the VDC are stone and clay construction with twig or tin roofs. Usually, the houses are two storey buildings, in one storey there is a hearth, kitchen, and a place to keep fowls such as chicken and pigeons. On the next storey there is a sleeping room and a storage room. With the households clustured together in *Tolas*, the land owned by each household encircles the settlement spreading out below and above it, although individual family land holdings may consists of a number of non-contiguous parcels.

For the *Dalits*, as for others in Bungkot, a *Syaula* (twig) to tin roofed house is an explicit indicator of the family's economy. Those who were schooled and earned their bread by being employed elsewhere in Nepal or India, or did high paying local jobs such as a petty contractor, had a tin roofed house. In such houses, one could see a family picture before the main entrance under a *Pali* demonstrating that they had been outside the village which was a source of pride to the family. *Pali*, *Gwali* and *Maach*,[2] various types of umbrellas or shades, were common in *Dalit* settlements. But one could hardly find latrines for human beings. Adults go to their fields and hide under *Kanla* (the end of terrace), or *Kholsa* (a dry ditch) for toiletting. But the children were free to defile everywhere and dogs, pigs and chickens usually cleaned it up.

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[2] A *Pali* is a shade just like a verandah, *Gwali* or *Dhansar* is a cattle shade with V shaped roof made of *Syaula* or *Khar* (a grass that is used for roofing) , and *Maach* is a cattle shade with a flat roof made from *Syaula*.

Except for Wayak and Kaule *Dalit* settlements in Bungkot face to the south, which keeps people warm in winter. Wayak was a little colder and Kaule had a moderate climate. The moon lights the settlement at night and the sun warms it during the day. A *Tuki*, a small kerosene lamp or a lantern, depending on the *Dalit's* economy, substitutes for moonlight in the household. In winter people keep themselves warm with rags or an open fire. Smoke from these fires is common inside a house; this smoke is used to smoke meat and vegetables, and to dry firewood. But it also makes people's eyes sore.

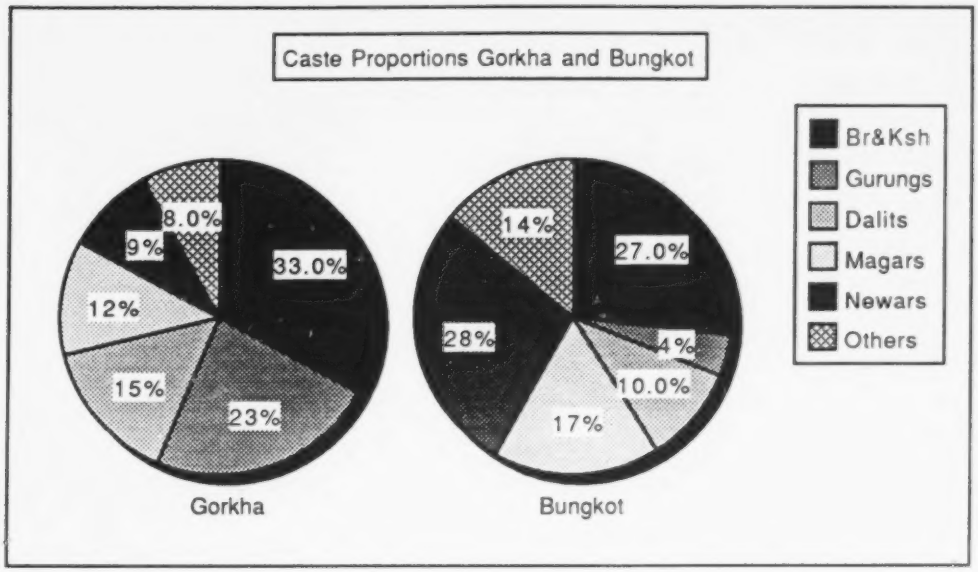
The Health Post on the north west corner of the VDC provides service to *Bungkote* with a Health Assistant. In the VDC there are four trained health workers and some lay persons with no training, or self trained, who provide first aid to the villagers. Serious cases were generally referred to the District Hospital in Gorkha Bazaar which is three to four hours walk away. In addition, every *Bungkote* acquired from his or her family knowledge of herbal medicine so they know herbal plants and what treatments can be done with each one. They also, like other Nepali of Synja, Kanchanpur, Dolakha, and Ilam districts (Shrestha & Lediard, 1980) would usually go to a *Dhami* or *Jhankri*, a traditional healer, before they would go to a health worker for consultation. *Dhami* or *Jhankri* practice *Aurvedic*, Naturopathic, and *Mantrik* (adjective of *Mantra*) medicine in which *Bungkotes* have placed their faith for centuries.

Bungkote, according to the auxiliary health worker at the Bungkot Health Post, generally suffer from gastritis, gastric upset, round worm, and get cuts, burns, and boils. *Bungkote* babies were subject to pneumonia, dysentery, diarrhoea and common cold while the elderly *Bungkote* had asthma, whooping cough, and in some cases tuberculosis. Women usually suffer from dysmenorrhoea, false labor pains, back aches, and head aches.

Demographic and Social Composition of Bungkot VDC

The population of Bungkot VDC is 8039 people, which is almost three percent of the people of Gorkha district. These people live in 1153 households with 111 of these households being *Dalits*. Almost all of the major caste groups in the district are found here with Newar, Brahman, and Kshatriya being the dominant population of this VDC. However, the distribution of caste/ethnic groups in Bungkot is somewhat different than the overall distribution in Gorkha district; in percentage terms there are less Brahmans and Kshatriaya (27% vs 33%), more Newars (28% vs 9%), more Magars (17% vs 12%), a much smaller percentage of Gurungs (4% vs 23%), and less *Dalits* (10% vs 15%). The remaining or 'other' 14% includes a variety of other caste groups. The following pie chart displays the ethnic/caste composition of Bungkot VDC and Gorkha District

Figure 1: Caste Composition of Gorkha District and Bungkot VDC, 1991



Source:

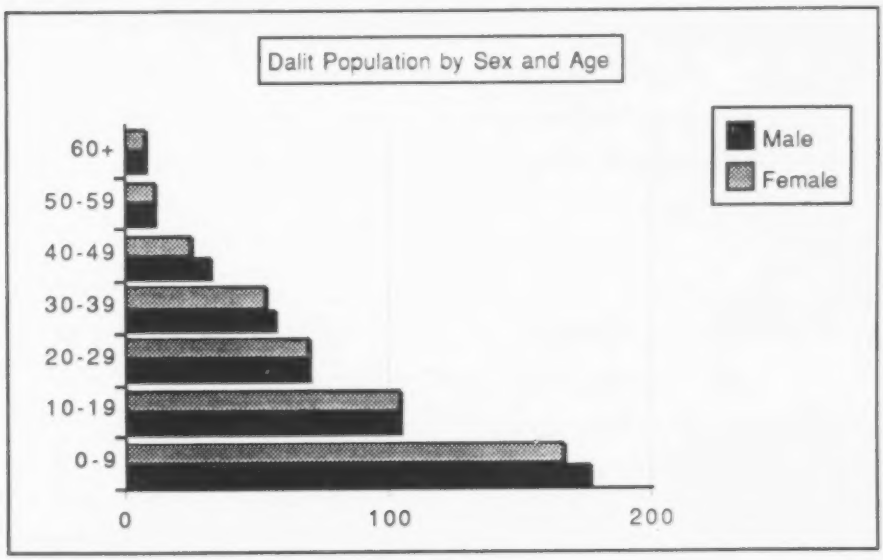
Although detailed data on the social class composition or economic status of the Bungkote is not available, if the people within these ethnic groups have the same economic status as others of their group, this distribution of ethnic groups would suggest Bungkot is a somewhat wealthier VDC than the 'average' village in Gorkha District.

Of the Bungkot population, 4049 are males and 3990 females, for a sex ratio of 101 which compares to the District ratio of 92.3 males to 100 females (in a population of 252,524 people). Again, this suggests Bungot is a somewhat atypical village in Gorkha district, with less men away from home than in other villages. Although available statistics on the age distribution of Gorkha and Bungkot were not gathered, my educational survey of Bungkot provides some age information. It suggests a typical "developing nation" population structure, reflecting a high birth rate and high death rate, with a little more than half the population under 20 years of age and about 5% over age 60. There are more males than females in the under 20 population but between 20 and 49 there are more women than men (likely reflecting the labor migration of adult males) and between 50 and 69 more men than women as migrant males return home to retire. Age 70 and over there are more women than men, perhaps showing a somewhat higher survival rate of women as they grow older.

Demographic and Social Compositon of *Dalit* Communities

If we look specifically at the demographic and social composition of the *Dalit* community in Bungkot, it is composed of the three caste groups referred to earlier Damai, Kami, and Sarki. This 10% of the Bungkote people is comprised of 1% Kami, 2% Damai, and 7% Sarki -- that is, 70% of the *Dalits* are Sarki, 20% Damai and 10% Kami. The community survey was able to gather data on perhaps all of the *Dalits* in Bungkot, and these data suggest a similar population pattern to that of Nepal as a whole, except with an even higher percentage of children. That is 58% of those surveyed are under 20 years of age (540 of 941), 4% (47) over 45 years of age, and only 38% (364) between ages 20 and 44. There are however equal or more males than women in almost every age group, with the relationship reversed only for age 35-44 where the fact there are 10 less men than women among the Sarkis (35 vs 45) results in a slight excess of females when all *Dalits* are aggregated (55 males to 57 females). Thus the sex ratio among the *Dalits* is 96.2, lower than Bungkot's 101 but higher than Gorkha District's 92.3. It is difficult to make definite assertions about these comparisons, because the overall number of people surveyd (951) is higher than the figure given by the VDC (10% of 8039), but it is believed this survey picked up a 100% sample of the *Dalit* population and these figures should be close to accurate.

FIgure 2: Bungkot *Dalit* Population by Sex and Age



Source: Community Survey of Bungkot, 1994

A *Dalit*'s life in Bungkot is itself a replica of the macro society with the practice of *Panichalne* and *Paninachalne*. A Damai is *Paninachalne* to a Kami and a Sarki, and a

Kami and Sarki who claim equal status do not dine together or marry each other. 'Ranking' them based on their self-described social status would result in a Sarki highest, a Kami next and a Damai last. If a Kami man marries a Sarki women they give birth to a new caste, *Kandaro* which is a lower caste person to both the Kami and Sarki. A similar situation arises in the case of the marriage of a Sarki woman with a Damai man; according to the tradition they give birth to a Damai and hence the woman and her baby are non-touchable to her maternal (Sarki) home. In all cases the circumstances are the same if the husband and wife are from the opposite castes in the above description, and yet they all are *Dalits*. Their life as a *Paninachalne tatha Chaunanahune Sudra* caste person is socially oppressed. Devi (age 36), a literate Damai woman told of her experience as a *Dalit* caste in Bungkot.

> We *Dalits* are suffering as a caste group. There is still a tradition of *Hapkaune, dapkaune, ani taulotapkaune* (high caste people scold us, threaten us, and take our best utensils for a low price). We know pretty well that they scorn us, intimidate us, and cheat us because...we are unschooled *Dalits*. (Discussion Date:- 1-3-2052 VS or 15 June 1995).

There are many Devis who share the same experience in Bungkot. They find difficulty even in a tea-stall because they are supposed to stay outside to drink tea and dine food. After they finish eating or drinking they have to wash their plate and glass by themselves. These *Dalits*, by tradition, can't enter into a *Panichalne* person's house no matter if it is the house of a Brahman, Kshatriya, Magar, Newar, or Gurung of a Hindu caste or Tamang or Sherpa of a Buddhist caste. Similarly, *Dalits* do not allow a *Chureta*[3] to enter their house, dine with them, touch them, or marry them.

Dalits in the community spoke of how they "learned" to be low caste people in the village, how their treatment as children and adults strongly taught them their "place" in Bungkote society.

> Shekhar:- I was a young child of six, I had gone to a Magar's home with my father. I should say unfortunately, I happened to go into the Magar's lap instead of my father's. As a result of my doing this, I was scolded many times. It is in the house of a Magar that I learnt to be a non-touchable and to be a person of a low caste. From that day on, I thought that the high caste society hated us.
>
> I found that the Brahman hates us more than any other caste groups. I do not know the reason but I do know that they are conservative. When I knew that the high caste people hated us I had a change in my nature. I now knew that I am a person of a low caste and hence began to differentiate myself from the high caste people in school and in the village. Thus I was alienated from the high caste people of my village.

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[3] A *Chureta* is a Muslim who sells *Chura* i. e. bangles.

> In the village, I found that people do not feel good if they see us at the time of a journey. Since I am a Kami, my presence to high caste people's journey is similar to Friday the 13th to the Christians. This made me more confined to my caste group people in village and in school.
>
> I found that some of the high caste people break their journey if they see my caste people. They believe that once they see us on their path, it is certain they cannot then do their work perfectly. You know some of the high caste people had scolded me simply because I was there at the time of their journey. All these things shaped my life and I learnt to be ***Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune*** caste when I was studying in primary school. (Date of discussion: 5-3-2052 VS or 19 June 1995).

A schooled person of Bungkot observed that one reason for the continuation of caste culture is schooled people's double standard. Using the one standard, they would cite national law so they could accept as touchable and respectable to the so-called high caste persons persons such as Bal Bahadur Pariyar, a well educated Damai once a District Education Officer in Gorkha and a Kami, Hira Lal Bishwakarma, a former minister in the Panchayat regime (1960-1990). Using the other standard, these so-called high caste people would put forward socio-religious or cultural law to call Damai, Kami, and Sarki *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudra*. My discussion with teachers in two schools in Bungkot provides a picture of this.

> Pradip:- We are schooled people. I think we have to think of it (the caste system) differently but we do not. I think we have a double standard. By one standard, we claim that all are equal and using the other standard, we live in a society where we claim that *Dalits* are lower caste people. This makes it difficult for us to do our work.
>
> Keshav:- I think we have two standards not because we choose to but because we are scared because of our religious values. We are scared that our ancestors will no longer be in heaven if we forget the caste culture. So we are not doing what we, as teachers, have to do.
>
> Tekraj:- It's again a difficult task to let a *Dalit* go into a house of high caste people even if they are neat and clean. Because the high caste people think that there will be a bad happening in the house if *Dalits* are permitted to come into it. Again this is a traditional rule that requires courage to change. Also, these *Dalits* are unschooled. All these things make it difficult for us to accept that *Dalits* are equal to us.
>
> Ramesh:- In my opinion, there are three reasons, social, religious, and intellectual. Socially they (*Dalit*) hold a low status, religiously they are impure, and intellectually they are inferior. Besides, we have seen Damai, Kami, and Sarki eating a *Sinu* (carcass). So, we, the high caste people, became reluctant to accept them as touchable. If they develop the habit of not eating *Sinu* and change their eating habits, it is for sure, we can accept them as touchable. For example, once we had a tradition of *Chhoichhito*[4]

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[4] *Chhoichhito* is a ritual of sprinkling water on the body of someone who touches a *Paninachalne tatha Chunanahune Dalit*.

but now it does not exist anymore because of the emergence of *Sanskritized Dalits*. (Discussion Dates: 2-3-2052 VS or 16 June, 1995; & 4-3-2052 VS or 18 June, 1995).

The teachers, and the shopkeepers whom I observed in a tea stall in Bungkot also showed their double standard in their caste behavior. They would scold a bare foot *Dalit* with rag clothes on, and at the same time would invite a well dressed schooled *Dalit* to sit on the same bench, though a little distance from them. A Brahman teacher of a primary school in Bungkot told me "it is their transitional behavior, from traditional to modern culture." Probably this teacher was right with his explanation as such behavior would enable teachers to survive in two separate worlds, a caste based hierarchical and traditional world in the village, and an egalitarian or humanitarian world in the workplace. I did not explore further these dual doings of a schooled high caste person since my focus of study was elsewhere, but the description here should give an idea of what the caste relations in the VDC were like for *Dalits*.

Economy of Bungkot

The main economy in Bungkot is subsistence farming, the growing of corn, millet, and *Ghaiya* (highland rice that requires no irrigation) on the terraced hillside. In addition there is a small service sector (52 teachers, 8 health workers, a half dozen police officers) who add wages from government funds to the village economy and about two dozen people engaged in some form of commercial activity (small shops for sewing, traditional crafts, or selling of foods and other goods; the rice mill, some carpentry). The poorer farm families also provide agricultural labor to the wealthier families, those which have more land.

In 1992, ninety six percent of the *Bungkote* were subsistence farmers implying they do not produce more than what they can consume for a year (Gorkha Development Project Survey, 1992). According to this survey each household kept on average four cattle (2 cows, and 2 water buffaloes), three goats and four fowls. These animals and fowls help *Bungkote* to obtain manure for agriculture, nutrition for health, and sometimes cash for buying necessary commodities. About one third of the households rely solely on their production from year to year and the rest, especially males, seek employment in order to feed their family. The above survey showed that in the year 1992 528 persons (including more than 100 *Dalits*) in Bungkot migrated/emigrated for a whole year for employment. Most of them went to India and were employed as watch persons, hotel boys, or soldiers. A few of them lived elsewhere in Nepal and a very few hold key positions such as captain in the army either in Nepal or in India.

Dalits in the Bungkot Economy

Overall, the *Dalits* occupy the poorest position in the Bungkot economy. A rough estimate shows that each *Dalit* household occupies on average 15 ropani[5] of land. In fact these people have access to little land everywhere in Nepal whether in Kavre (Sacherer, 1981 cited in Seddon, 1990:188) or in Bungkot. Only a few households possess irrigable rice fields, so they grew corn, millet, and *Ghaiya*. Following traditional practice, they do inter cropping, and crop cycling and they use organic as well as chemical fertilizers for better production.

Very few *Dalits* are employed in the public service sector, but some continue traditional trades (blacksmithing, cobbling, and tailoring), and provide wage labor to other farmers. At the time of the research 117 *Dalits* had migrated out for wage labor, or about 20% of the adult population. The *Dalit* position in the labor market and productive economy is aptly summarized by a 75 year old Sarki man who felt that they had to survive with *Doko*, *Namlo*, *ra Hansia*, a big basket, a basket holding rope, and a sickle instead of *Kalam*, *Kapi*, and *Kitab*, a pen, exercise book, and textbook.

What kind of jobs are available to *Dalits* ? I classified them into four categories: traditional but caste specific, traditional but not caste specific, transitional, and modern. I also tried to figure out the approximate ceiling of the honorarium or salary for work in each category.

Table 3: *Dalit's* Occupation and the Honorarium Paid to Them

Occupation	Damai	Kami	Sarki
a) Traditional caste specific occupation	* sew clothes * play music for different occasions * go for *Baya* (an act of begging by playing traditional music)	* blacksmithing (make and repair home appliances as well as agricultural equipment	* wash cooking pots in feast ceremonies * fetch *Doli* and other kinds of load * plow land

[5] 3876 sq. ft. of land makes one ropani, which is a little more than a North American city lot of 100 by 35 feet.

Table 3 con'td: *Dalit's* Occupation and the Honorarium Paid to Them

Occupation	Damai	Kami	Sarki
Income, from traditional jobs	* for sewing a Damai household gets approximately ten *Pathi* (25 kg) unhusked rice, and one *Khangre* (15 kg) corn. * for playing music it ranges from Rs 25 - 150 depending on the distance they go and days they spent.	* a Kami household gets approximately ten *Pathi* (25 kg) unhusked rice, and one *Khangre* (15 kg) corn.	* for washing cooking pots they get leftover foods, and a small amount of cash, a little less than Rs 30.00 *for fetching *Doli* and load they get Rs. 30 - 70 a day depending on the situation and the distance * for plowing land, they get two types of honorarium if they do *Niju* (do all the farm work of a high caste household including plowing) they get food for the family and approximately Rs. 1000.00 cash a year * if they do *Thado Siyo* (only plowing) they get 100 kg of unhusked rice or corn depending on the area of the land they have to plow.
b) traditional non-caste specific job	* do any kind of agricultural and domestic work	* do any kind of agricultural and domestic work	* do any kind of agricultural and domestic work
Income	Male Rs. 30 a day Female Rs. 25 a day	Male Rs. 30 a day Female Rs. 25 a day	Male Rs. 30 a day Female Rs. 25 a day
c) Transitional job	* Masonry * Carpentry	* Masonry * Carpentry	* Masonry * Carpentry
Income	Rs. 50 - 100 a day	Rs. 50 - 100 a day	Rs. 50 - 100 a day
d) Modern Job	* service inside Nepal police, army, peon, watchperson, porter, collie * service outside Nepal police, army, peon, watchperson, porter, collie	* service inside Nepal police, army, peon, watchperson, porter, collie * service outside Nepal police, army, peon, watchperson, porter, collie	* service inside Nepal police, army, peon, watchperson, porter, collie * service outside Nepal police, army, peon, watchperson, porter, collie
Income	* Inside Nepal Rs. 1200- 2000 a month * Outside Nepal Rs. 2000 - 3000 a month	* Inside Nepal Rs. 1200- 2000 a month * Outside Nepal Rs. 2000 - 3000 a month	* Inside Nepal Rs. 1200- 2000 a month * Outside Nepal Rs. 2000 - 3000 a month

It is apparent that traditional work of the *Dalits* pays little in comparison with transitional and modern jobs, but all types of employment require a relationship which enables the *Dalit* to get a job when he or she searches for it. A *Dalit* in Bungkot told me that he knew the keys to success in the job market. These keys according to him were doing *Chakari*, finding *Aphnumanchhe*, doing *Bhansun*, and relying on *Kegarne*. The first key *Chakari* is the cultivation of a relationship in which the person seeks work, displays loyalty and a willingness to be "at the service" of the one s/he seeks employment from. Within such a relationship a person might be asked, for example, to become the family cook or provide child care. Culturally *Dalits* felt they knew how to serve the high caste people but they were hesitant to do *Chakari* for a job-providing person who is usually high caste, because they were supposed to be untouchable for high caste people and therefore have not been allowed to enter into their homes. In this situation, they had little chance to do *Chakari* for work.

The second key to getting a job is to figure out *Aphnumanchhe*, finding a person who favours the job searcher, and is willing to support, sponsor or hire that person. For example, Sekhar, a male Kami and Goma a female Damai told me that they had no *Aphnumanchhe* to favor them in politics, on the school management committee, or in district headquarters. By *Aphnumanchhe* they did not mean their own relatives but persons who would favor their case for a job. So, a school drop out *Dalit* male goes to India or somewhere to find his *Aphnumanchhe*, mostly relatives. A female, however, has no such choice for she must remain close to home.

The third key a *Dalit* must have to find employment is *Bhansun*, that is being able to influence the job providing agency through pressure from someone, someone who is seen as powerful. But the Bungkote *Dalit* have little or no contact with *Thulo Manchhe* (great people), especially of their own caste for very few from their cast have such power.

The fourth key *Kegarne*, implies believing in fate to provide a job, and cultivating frustration when fate produces no such results. For example, the female *Dalit* who cannot do *Chakari* for the high caste person, cannot leave home to seak *Aphnumanchhe* and has no relations or caste members in this position locally, and has even less chance than the male *Dalits* of knowing powerful people who might put pressure (*Bhansun*) on others, ends up believing in *Kegarne* and simply waiting for fate to deliver a job to her.

Political and Administrative Structure

Bungkote villagers have access to the national, district, and village level political systems. At the national level Nepal has had a constitutional monarchy since 1990. The parliament

has two houses: the *Pratinidhi Sabha* or 'lower house' and the *Rastriya* Sabha or 'upper house'. Every adult of age 16 and above is eligible to vote for the representatives of the lower house. Individuals are nominated by each party to run in the local constituency (which includes a few other VDC's) and the voter selects them on the ballot by selecting the symbol of their party. There are more than 70 registered parties in Nepal but there are less than a dozen parties which have their representatives in parliament at present. In Bungkote's case in the mid term election of 1992 which was the last election, they voted for four major political parties, Nepali Congress, Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist Leninist), Rastriya Prajatantra Party, and the Nepal Communist Party (United Front). The party which elects the majority of the 205 member lower house forms the government, and all parties with elected representatives designate an equavalent percentage of members to the 60 seat upper house (except the King designates some upper house members).

Besides national elections Bungkote vote only for the local government (they do not vote for a district or zone level of government). In local goverment elections they vote for one individual to represent their ward (there are 9 wards) and a chairperson and vice-chairperson for the whole VDC. Despite the fact these are not party-based elections, in practise all know to which political party these people belong. At present the 11 VDC elected members consists of 9 members from the Nepali Congress Party, 1 from the Nepal Communist Party (United Front) and 1 from the Rastriya Prajatantra Party, but there are neither *Dalits* nor women representatives among them. The caste composition shows 1 Brahman, 3 Kshatriya, 1 Gurung, 3 Magar, and 3 Newar.

In order to increase the political balance in the VDC there is a system of elected members nominating four consultative members for their ward. This body of 36 consultative members, 9 elected representatives , and the village chair person and vice chairperson makes a Village Council. In this full village council, there are still no women but there are three *Dalit* males, one Damai, one Kami, and one Sarki. This village council has one government paid secretary who is responsible for day to day activities of the VDC.

A villager gets services from the local government and VDC level service agencies; the Gorkha district government and district level service agencies; and the central government and central level service agencies located in Kathmandu. A villager can also approach any of these levels of governments and service agencies for both individual or community concerns, depending on their interest and physical and social access to it.

Education: Transmission of Cultural Knowledge in Bungkot

Historically in Bungkot all transmission of skills and knowledge (whether of an economic, religious or family nature) was though the family, from generation to generation. The cultural context so transmitted as well as the consciousness of people of Bungkot is deeply embedded in Hinduism and the caste system as it has been for generations. This historic cultural transmission or 'education' is reflected in the way each person thinks about his or her place in the universe and in folk theories the *Dalits* themselves hold about their caste origins.

Every single Bungkot dweller whether he/she is a so-called "pure caste" Brahman or a so-called "impure caste" *Dalit* could answer basic philosophical questions such as what is life? why are we here in this earth? who brought us here? what should we do in life? One could find a similar answer from all because of his/her philosophical orientation through *Sanatanism*.[6] The Bungkot dwellers knew the link between cosmic person and demonic person. They could interpret mind, matter, and soul under a philosophical dualism. In discussion they would raise the point that matter is a means to nurture *Jivatma* (individual self); soul is a means to reach *Paramatma* (cosmogenic self); a human mind is a process; and a human body is a medium to attain *Sat* (pure existence), *Chit* (pure consciousness), and *Ananda* (pure bliss). In the process of unfolding these philosophical ideas, the Bungkot dwellers would mix their ethico-spiritual doctrine of *Karma* (fate), moral values of *Varnashram* duty, beliefs and rites of religious dogma, and their ethno-cultural superiority or inferiority of the Aryan tradition.

Almost all of their philosophical ideas were found in their behavior in a certain ritualistic mode of expression. Echoing their philosophical knowledge, the people in Bungkot would frequently discuss kin pollution, marital pollution, and body pollution. Thus, they valued the mystic dogma of *Karma* and *Punarjanma* (re-birth) as well as *Punnya* (spiritual merit) and *Pap* (spiritual demerit). On this ground, one could feel the rhythm of Bungkote *Dalit's* life as carrying on the antiquity of pre-Vedic times, however there was a formulation, re-formulation, and ritualization of moral values from time to time. These moral values were blended with the caste culture, natural law, and the idea of purity and pollution and are similar to what Saraf (1986) found in a Hindu East Indian society.

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[6] An oral tradition that is believed to be helpful in understanding eternal truth or the cosmogenic self This tradition carries the ancestral doings of the past into the present through ancient Hindu knowledge, beliefs, values, and practice.

These orientations, which could be thought of as "banked information" in Freire's terms although they do undergo change, had both positive and negative consequences on the life style of the people in Bungkot. If positively taken, a Bungkot dweller knows how to survive with a minimum collection of materials for maximum pleasure and if negatively thought of, they had developed what Bista (1992) calls fatalism and perpetuated what Friere (1976) calls a culture of silence in the name of a culture of respect and tolerance under a caste line.

This philosophical orientation paved the way to categorizing every person, even a Nepali visitor like me, by asking first *Kasma Hau*? to which caste do you belong? In the second step, they figured out where I fit under a broad caste line such as auspicious and pure, auspicious but impure, inauspicious but pure, and inauspicious and impure. Finally, they treated me according to their caste-appropriate behavior to the appropriate caste behavior of mine; however, as my study progressed, I could change their behavior towards me as that of a friend.

For themselves in Bungkot as everywhere in Nepal, the different categories of caste people, could be divided as *Panichalne* and *Paninachalne*. As mentioned earlier, *Dalits* belong to a sub-category of *Paninachalne Jat* who were considered both *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune* person. Others could neither touch them nor take water from them. On this ground, the *Dalits* of Bungkot were similar to pariah groups of people such as blacksmiths of Arabic and Somali land, Pigmies of Central and Southern Africa, Gypsies of Europe, Blacks of South Africa, Negroes of North America, Yetas of Japan, and Harijan of India. In other words, *Dalits* in Bungkot were treated as pariah groups of people in Nepal under the yoke of castism.

Dalits and the Transmission of Culture

Dalits in Bungkot have their own knowledge about the origin of caste. Damai, Kami, and Sarki each have a different story to tell but they all believe that they were once Brahman. In the course of time somebody deceived them and compelled them to be non-touchable. Govind, a Damai by caste, and an illiterate person in his early seventies with a radical idea about non-touchability, shares his knowledge of the origin of his caste.

> In those ancient days, we, Damai were *Bhanja* (the maternal nephew) of a Brahman. All we people belonged to one family. One day, it was a day for the sacrament called *Upanayan Sanskar* for *Mamako Chhoro* (son of a maternal uncle). On that day one has to be there to tell *Lagan bhayo lagan bhayo* (when it is an appropriate time for the ceremony). *Bhanja*, the maternal nephew, was there. So *Mama* (maternal uncle) asked him to tell *Lagan bhayo*. As you know, one has to a play musical instrument during that time. Actually there was no one to do that. So the *Mama* again asked

Bhanja to hit a *Tapari* (a plate made of leaf) with a stick in order to make a sound. The *Bhanja* did that.

The mother of the *Bhanja* found out about it later on. She cried with her elder brother for letting her son go to tell *Lagan bhayo* and asking him to hit a *Tapari* with a stick. Knowing that his sister was not happy with what he did to her son, the elder brother told her that what he did was necessary to run this earth. He said, "don't worry, you are poor, so I'll construct a house for you and do all the things that I have to do for you." Then she believed her brother. In the course of time, the descendants of the brother refused to accept that all this happened. Thus we were separated from a Brahman.

There is another story too. Once all four of the Brahman brothers were gossiping with each other. One of the brothers proposed to smoke tobacco but the youngest brother did not like that proposal. So he sat aside to tell all of his brothers that I am not in a position to smoke tobacco. From that day on, we became different from the rest of the Brahman, but otherwise we too are the descendants of the Brahman.(Discussion Date:-2-3-2052 VS or 16 June, 1995)

Kedar a literate, politically active, and socially conscious Kami (age 58) has gathered a history of the origin of his caste and the reason they are considered non-touchable. In the course of our discussion he shared how a wicked *Mama* made them alienated from others and eventually made them outcastes.

Kedar:- *Barma* (*Brahma*) and *Bishwakarma*[7] are our ancestors. They did not have the idea of touchability and non-touchability. They did not have castism. *Barma* used to go for consultation with *Bishwakarma* in order to construct this world. *Bishwakarma* was a good designer. He had a peculiarity that he never worked with his hands, but worked only with his mental ability. Knowing this ability, *Barma* offered his sister to *Bishwakarma* for marriage. *Bishwakarma* had a son with *Barma's* sister.

One day, *Barma* offered a golden *Pirka* (mat) to his *Bhanja*, *Bishwakarma's* son. *Bhanja* used to eat his meal sitting on that *Pirka* that was offered by his *Mama*. Time went on. Unfortunately, one day, *Bhanja* lost his golden Pirka. So he made himself a wooden *Pirka* in memory of the golden *Pirka*. Even today there is a tradition in the Brahman's house to use a wooden *Pirka* when eating in the kitchen. The person who makes *Pirka* these days is a *Chunaro*. He is now called Kami, not *Brahman and we* marriy with the *Chunaro*.

In the course of time, the descendants of the *Biswakarma* lost their mental ability because of this Kali Yug.[8] As a result of all this happenings, we Kami, the descendants of the *Biswakarma*, began to make agriculture equipment that is needed by a farmer. A farmer could do nothing without the equipment that we made for generations.

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[7] Gods who are considered responsible for the creation of this earth and the species on it.

[8] According to Hindu legend, there is a cycle of 4,320, 000 years for four *Yug* namely *Satya*, *Treta*, *Dwapar*, and *Kali*. *Kali Yug* is translated as Iron age or age of discord that has to go for 432,000 years. The year 1996 is 5096 year of *Kali Yug*.

> We do have our Veda although I don't know what it is. But I do know a poem from our Veda that we chant when we worship our ancestor, *Bishwakarma*. The poem says:
>
> *Hotro, Sanaso, Ghanko thulo ghau*
>
> *Pujaun bhai ho Bishwakarmako Pau.*
>
> (Oh brothers! let us worship *Biswakarma's* feet and work with our tools, *Hatro, Sanaso* and *Ghan*). (Discussion Date:-19-2-2052 VS or 2 June, 1995)

A Sarki claims a different origin for his caste, in the sense that he belongs to a Brahman's brother's side while a Damai and a Kami believe that they belong to a Brahman's sister side. Netra (60), a Sarki by caste, and a literate person who had been in India for a job, calls Brahman a Sarki's *Baraju* (ancestor) and shares his ancestral origin.

> Once there were four Brahman brothers. They were in need of food. So they went to heaven in search of food. In the heaven, the king, Indra gave them a cow which could feed them. It was not a simple cow but was a *Kamadhenu*.[9] The four brothers were pleased to have *Kamadhenu* with them on earth but *Kamadhenu* asked for a condition; according to her condition if she dies some one should be there to eat her flesh. The four Brahman brothers gave their word that they themselves would eat *Kamadhenu's* flesh when she dies. Thus they were able to bring *Kamadhenu* down on earth to solve their food problems. One day, the *Kamadhenu* died. The Brahman brothers had difficulty in eating *Kamadhenu's* meat, so three of the brothers went away allowing their youngest brother to prepare *Kamadhenu's* meat for them. But the three elder brothers did not show up on time for the meal. So the youngest brother ate the *Kamadhenu's* meat all by himself. When the three brothers knew that their youngest brother already ate *Kamadhenu's* meat, they came home and discarded their youngest brother from their caste. From that day on, we the descendants of the youngest brother became Sarki, and the rest of you became high caste, higher than us. If you do not believe what I am saying, you can find similar surnames and the *Gotra*[9] of a Brahman with a Sarki as a proof of my words. (Discussion Date: 17-2-2052 or 31 May, 1995).

An analysis of these folk histories on the origin of *Dalit* castes brings dietary theory in the Sarki's case, occupational theory in Damai's and Kami's case, and exploitation theory in all three cases as the reason for the origin of the caste culture. These folk theories also echo the functional theory of Emile Durkheim, the exploitation theory of Karl Marx, and the dietary theory of Baba Amdekar,[10] or represent Wright's (1994) argument that social

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[9] A Kamadhenu is a celestial cow that gives everything according to its caretaker's desire.

[9] The name of an ancestral link or a reputed person of an exogamous group.

[10] Baba Amdekar himself belonged to a *Dalit* community of India. He was a respected and well-known person in India for his campaign to transform the *Dalit* community.

inequality, in the form of a low caste people such as *Dalit*, is a bi-product of either an achievement or exploitation model. Moreover, these folk theories comply with the theory of spiritual progression put forth by the sacred Hindu text Mahabharat which claims that all the people were once Brahman. It implies these people were knowledgeable about the relation of cosmogenic self and individual self but for some reasons as the time went on, some of the people could not continue their travel through a spiritual progression. They could not perform their *Dharma* (Duty) as set under the *Varnashram* system. Such peoples were treated as different castes depending on their level of spiritual progression and understanding of the cosmogenic self and its relationship with the individual self. Some of these people were kept out of the *Varnashram* system and *Dalits* happened to belong to that category. The Bungkote *Dalits* preserved these values in their folk theories.

Education: Schooling in Bungkot

Local History of Schools: Gurukul Schools

The development of schooling in Bungkot can be thought of as having two phases: the tradition of *Gurukul* type schools, schooling that occurs at a place where the Guru lives, and what local people call "English" schools which have gradually replaced the *Gurukul* schools. Both of these schooling types are reflected in the Bungkot data on school attainment and literacy.

Prior to English schools there was a continued tradition of *Gurukul*l type school with the *Gurukul* type schools likely going back many centuries. Some Brahmans and non-Brahmans used to school villagers in their *Pindhi*, a shaded platform and some sages such as Lakhan Thapa, a national hero who lived in Bungkot for a couple of years and was hanged in the late 1840s, also instructed villagers. But local oral history covers primarily the last 70 years or so. The long remembered Gurus or teachers include three men from Namjung VDC, bordering Bungkot, one man from Bakrang VDC which also borders Bungkot, and three men from Bungkot. These men were Phanindra Prasad Paneru, an astrologer of Namjung VDC, Khorande[11] or Punnya Nidhi Dhakal and Rudra Dhakal (both Jaishi Brahman) of Namjung VDC, Ganesh Dutta Aryal, a *Guru* of Bakrang VDC, Prem Bahadur Thapa Magar,[12] Mitra Lal Shrestha, and Kedar Prasad Wagle of Bungkot.

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[11] I apologize for using this derogatory name *Khorande* meaning a lame person however people in this village know him by this name.

[12] This person is known as Master *Budha* in the village. Master means teacher and *Budha* means an old person

Phanindra Prasad Paneru taught astrology and the Ved to Brahman's sons. In return, he asked his pupils to chop wood, make ropes to tie cattle, and help in other domestic affairs for him. The pupils used to take their *Kharcha* (groceries) and prepare food by themselves. There was no tuition fee to be paid as such but as a tradition the pupil had to offer something to the *Guru* if the pupil came to visit him. Thus the pupil would offer bananas or a pot of yogurt or basket of fruits whatever they had in their houses.

Ganesh Dutta Aryal taught different subjects. He was a little bit liberal in the sense that he had both Brahman and non-Brahman students excluding *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune* caste such as Damai, Kami, and Sarki. Besides, he had some female pupils although only from his neighborhood. Mr. Aryal prepared many of the students for the *Madhyama* level exam in Sanskrit which is equivalent to matriculation in the British system of education. These students used to go to Banaras, India in order to appear in the *Madhyama* level exam. The subjects he taught were Sanskrit grammar and literature such as Kaumudi, Hitopadesh, Raghubansha, Madhyakaumudi, and Siddhantakaumudi, subjects which were totally different than those taught in the 'English' schools. The pupils used to bring their *Kharcha* (groceries) and prepare food and wash dishes by themselves.

Mr. Aryal had two ways of teaching. The first one was a kind of monitorial system. In this system, he used to teach the elder pupils and in return he asked them to teach new comers. Aryal *Guru* himself used to supervise the ongoing activities. The second approach to teaching that he followed was a kind of internship. He would send his pupils to perform priestly work in the village. As a preparatory class, he would orient them and as a follow-up, he would organize a post orientation session where a pupil had to present what he had done to perform the priestly work. As a tuition fee to a teacher the students would offer some gifts to his *Guru* on the eve of *Guru Purnima* which is a traditional teacher's day sometimes in July.

Two other *Gurus* who taught *Karmakanda* (priestly work) were Punnya Nidhi Dhakal and Rudra Dhakal, who were a father and a son and were both disabled. Punnya Nidhi was lame and Rudra was a blind person. Both of them were also expert in astrology and they taught a substantial number of Brahmans from Bungkot. In contrast, Kedar Prasad Wagle was a liberal *Guru* in the sense that he had students of all caste groups. He was like Mr. Aryal in this sense except he also taught *Dalits* which Mr. Aryal did not. He also taught Sanskrit as did Mr. Aryal but Mr. Wagle added the Nepali language to his subject matter. In return, he received an honorarium that was collected from people and/or granted from the government.

Prem Bahadur Thapa Magar and Mitra Lal Shrestha were radical *Gurus*. *Bungkote* used the word "Master" for these *Gurus* since they did not belong to a Brahman caste. These two persons ventured to teach *Dalits* in the early 1940s. However they would keep these *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Jat* a little bit far from other pupils, pupils of castes called touchable. Since both the *Gurus* belonged to touchable but non-Brahman castes they themselves knew nothing about *Karmakanda*, priestly work. Perhaps for that reason, or more likely because they saw other knowledge as important, they would teach Nepali, mathematics, and income generating skills such as bee keeping, and horticulture. An interview with the Thapa Magar showed how and why he started to school Bungkote in general and *Dalits* in particular.

> I started to educate people in 1939. It was a kind of tutorial class. I used to charge 25 *Paisa*[13] a month per person. I continued for eight years this way. In 1947 I began to take 50 *Paisa* per person per month. The money, 50 *Paisa* was equal to a wage for eight labourers working in a field for one day at that time. Those who did not have money used to bring whatever they had at home to give me. I used to teach them in a *Goth* (cow-shade) or on a *Chautara*. During most of that time, women did not come to me for study. I remember (the exception) it was in 1953-1954 when two Newar women came to study with me. Actually they were migrants and their father was a retired army officer. With the beginning of a primary school in 1958 I abandoned my business of teaching children in my home and I became a primary school teacher.
>
> The reason that I took interest in schooling my villagers was that I happened to memorize a poem while I was in Kathmandu. The poem says: *Bidya nai dhan sampati, Bidya nai sabathok* i.e. knowledge is money and knowledge is everything. This poem helped me to understand the importance of schooling in village life. Similarly there was another poem. I don't know who wrote it but it says: *Utha utha bhaiho aba padhne bela bhayo, Sutne bela haina yo* (It's not a time to sleep but to wake up dear brothers). (Date of Interview:-5-2-2052 VS or 19 May 1995).

Mr. Thapa Magar also recalled the days when he used to teach *Dalits*. He told me how he was encouraged to teach *Dalits* in his village and what he had taught and why he taught them.

> I remember six *Dalits*, four of them were Damai and the rest were Kami from Wayak. I did not mind teaching these Damai, and Kami because I used to study with Pode and Kushle (two non-touchable castes in the Newar group) in Kathmandu. I did not see the *Chhoichhito* there, however I kept the Kami and Damai separate from other high caste people while I taught them. I did so because it was a village tradition at that time. In addition to literacy I taught them about production education, including horticulture farming and bee keeping. My intention was to make them able

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[13] 25 Paisa is a quarter of a Nepali currency, Rupiyan, and Paisa may be translated as 'cent' in English. Currently, Rs. 40.00 makes a Canadian dollar.

> to write *Tamasuk* (a traditional agreement paper for making loans and selling land) because a *Tamasuk* writer used to get 50 *Paisa*. I earned money writing *Tamasuk* and then I thought others could do the same and earn money for their livelihood. The next reason was that if these *Dalits* were schooled they would be able to write private letters to their relatives who were in India or elsewhere for a job. (Date of Interview:-5-2-2052 VS or 19 May 1995)

This history displays a number of aspects of early education in Bungkot, aspects that were widespread throughout Nepal and many of which had been present for decades, perhaps centuries. All teaching was done by interested individuals, partly to provide themselves an income but also to teach knowledge and skills which they thought important for others to learn. Pupils came to the teacher at his residence, often living there for a period of time, wanting to learn the specific knowledge taught and paying something for it, although often the pay was within a barter economy rather than a cash one. The knowledge transmitted was of three types: religious and traditional including religious texts, priestly duties and astrology; language and specifically Sanskrit and Nepali; and practical or knowledge related to 'productive' activity.

Most teachers were Brahmins, and only they had the knowledge and right to teach the religious texts. But it was lower caste teachers, called Masters rather than Gurus because they were not Brahman, who taught the productive labour skills and knowledge. And whether priestly knowledge or productive knowledge, there were not examinations or certificates but within the teacher-student relationship the student would be recognized as 'knowing' or 'having more to learn'. Yet there was one examination subject taught, Sanskrit, the written language of the historical religous texts. For this subject a student could make a trip to Benares in Uttar Pradesh province of India and 'sit an exam' at the 150 year old Benares College.

Although all teachers were not Brahmin all were men, and almost all students were male also. Yet, here as elsewhere in Nepali history there are reports of the occasional woman seeking education and being accepted by the teacher (Ganesh Dutta Aryal, Prem Bahadur Thapa Magar). One difference from male students stands out still; such women students do not come from any distance to stay with or near the Gurus' residence but 'live nearby', reflecting the notion that women do not leave their home for such activities.

There are also reports of teachers accepting *Dalits* as pupils, not to learn priestly knowledge but to learn Nepali and Sanskrit (Kedar Prasad Wagle), and Nepali, mathematics, and income generating skills (Prem Bahadur Thapa Magar and Mitra Lal Shrestha). Interestingly only one of these men is either Brahman or Kshatriya caste; but primarily it is a Magar and a Newar who were the fore-runners, encouraging *Dalits* to

attend school. They were 'touchable' castes, higher castes than the *Dalits* who would be 'untouchable' to them, but for various reasons they were willing to include *Dalits* among their pupils. It is also interesting that these same teachers accepted women as students. Perhaps in both cases one of the reasons was that the knowledge they taught was not forbidden to *Dalits* or women.

Local History of Schools: 'English' Schools

Six years after the introduction of the first 'English' school (1952) in the district headquarters, Gorkha Bazaar, some *Bungkote* took interest in initiating this type of school in their village in 1958 (2015 VS). These schools which had their history in the Rana contact with England more than 100 years earlier were seen as quite different from the traditional *Gurukul* schools, but the transition from one type to the other was partly accomplished by some of the same people who provided the earlier schools. For example, Prem Bahadur Thapa Magar says in his interview above "With the beginning of a primary school in 1958 I abandoned my business of teaching children in my home and I became a primary school teacher."

These schools called the 'English' type by Bungkote (and other Nepali) are the schools supported by the present government of Nepal, through the Ministry of Education and Culture and the District Education Office. The term is not quite right, for these are Nepali schools in which teaching occurs primarily in Nepali and the subject matter is that which is considered important for the present and future needs of Nepal. Consequently, I have called them "contemporary" schools, although some of the "traditional" schooling also continues into the present day.

All of the Bungkot inhabitants have contributed to these schools in one way or the other; however there were a number of persons[14] who were often given credit for their invaluable leadership. Almost all of these men are still active in their village and *Tola* working for the continued development of schooling among the people there. Each had a specific school in

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[14] These men were Dil Bahadur K. C., Ishwar Bahadur Thapa, Lekh Bahadur Thapa, Indra Bahadur Bhandari, and Dil Bahadur Bhandari from Kshatriya community; Ved Prasad Tiwari from Brahman community; Hari Prasad Shrestha, Jhalak Bahadur Shrestha, and Ram Bahadur Shrestha from Newar community; Phatta Bahadur Rana, Man Bahadur Thapa, Prem Bahadur Thapa, and Om Bahadur Chumi from Magar community; and Bishnu Gurung, Ganja Bahadur Gurung, Dil Bahadur Gurung, and Gagan Bahadur Gurung from Gurung community.

their own ward[15] to look after and where they laboured in order to make more people educated and literate.

The first school in 1958 appeared in a place where there was a mixed community of Brahman, Kshatriya and Newar people. Dil Bahadur K. C. and Iswar Bahadur Thapa were the ones who took the initiative to establish it. It began as a primary school, and eventually became a lower secondary school then a secondary school. Within a year, in 1959, the Magar community especially through the work of Prem Bahadur Thapa Magar and Phatta Bahadur Rana Magar opened a school in a ward with mostly Magar and Newar residents, but also some Dami and Kami. It seemed that there was a wave beginning to open schools, but at this point it stopped for over a decade, stopping about the time the King moved agains the democratic government, jailing its leaders (in 1961). The wave to open schools began again in 1970, and again in a Brahman and Kshatriya community, but in this case a community which included some Sarki and Kami. Four schools were opened between 1970 and 1978 and there was another hiatus for a decade. From 1988 to 1990 four more schools were opened, but two of these were private 'for profit' schools which lasted only two or three years. By 1990 then the present school situation had been attained in Bungkot, with 9 schools in 7 wards, and with two of those schools teaching up to the secondary level, one lower secondary and one full secondary. Table 6 displays the chronology showing the year when each school was established and which caste was living, and continues to live in its vicinity.

Table 4: Chronology of School Establishment and Caste Group in Catchment Areas

Year	Name of School	Caste Group in Catchment Area
1958	Shahid Smriti High School (I-X) Ward No. 3 Khabdi Bhanjyang	Brahman, Kshatriya, Newar
1959	Chandika Primary school (I-IV) Ward No. 3 Lakhedanda	Magar, Newar, Damai, Kami
1970	Rameshwori Lower Secondary School (I-VIII) Ward No. 9 Mailung	Brahman, Kshatriya, Sarki, Kami

[15] A couple of houses makes a *Tola*; more than one *Tola* makes a village, and more than one village makes up a Village Development Committee. A ward is a different way of clustering households, associated with electoral politics, and there are 9 wards in Bungkot.

1973	Makaipur Primary School (I-V) Ward No.1 Makaipur	Gurung, Damai, Newar
1974	Khabdi Primary School (I-V) Ward No. 2 Tiwari Gaun	Brahman, Kshatriya
1978	Dahale Primary School (I-III) Ward No. 8 Dahale	Brahman, Kshatriya, Sarki, Damai
1988	Ramche Primary School (I-IV) Ward No. 6 Chhapthok	Newar, Brahman, Kshatriya, Sarki
1988*	Gorakhnath Boarding School (I-III) Ward No. 8 Bikhire Pokhari	Newar, Brahman, Kshatriya
1988*	Gorkha Boarding School (I-III) Ward No. 3 Khabdi Bhanjyang	Brahman, Kshatriya, Newar
1989	Lakhan Thapa Primary School (I-III) Ward No. 4 Kaule	Magar, Sarki
1990	Jaubari Primary School (I-III) Ward No.1 Chhote Ludi	Magar

* See footnote [16]

All of these schools would start as Primary schools, but the program of two of them was eventually extended to include lower secondary (to class VIII; Shahid Smriti and Rameshwori), and of these one was again extended to include secondary (to class X, Shahid Smriti). Both of these schools include primarily Brahman and Kshatriya families in their catchment areas and this is perhaps significant in the fact they became secondary schools wheras the much earlier Chandrika school with predominantly Magars and Newars in its catchment area remains a primary school. However, distribution of schools among the wards may also have been a factor.

By the end of this period of the development of 'English' schooling in Bungkot, there are nine schools, with every ward but two (Ward 5 and 7) having at least a primary school, and two wards having two schools (Ward 1 and 3). The catchment area of four of the

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[16] These two schools were private "profit making" schools which survived a few years only. A group of shareholders (from the Brahman, Kshatriya, and Newar castes) initiated Gorakhnath Boarding School as a private English school with twin objectives: money-making and what they called "quality education." This school survived for only 3 years. In this school, there were 2 *Dalits*: Buddhi Bahadur Nepali (a boy) of Ward No. 8 and Pavitra Sunar (a girl) of Ward No. 3. out of the 55 boys and 25 girls in the school. A group of Gurungs of Makaipur initiated Gorkha Boarding School with the same twin objectives It survived for 2 years. There were no *Dalit* students out of its 60 students (45 boys and 15 girls). Although called 'boarding schools' neither of them were schools with resident students

schools is primarily Brahman and Kshatriya (Shahid Smriti, Rameshwori, Kabdi and Dahale), of three is primarily Magar (Chandika, Lakhan Thapa, and Jaubari), and of one primarily Gurung (Makaipur) and of one other primarily Newar (Ramche). Six of the schools include *Dalit* pupils, as a minority in all of the schools they attend, and all other castes except Gurungs are found among these six schools.

School Attainment in Bungot

I gathered the names of all the people from Bungkot who are known to have ever graduated from school. This does not provide information on how many people ever attended these schools; although it might be possible to get a fairly accurate figure through oral history methods it would have been a full-scale study to do so. It does, however, give some indication of which groups of people have achieved 'higher' levels of schooling in the Sanskrit system and the 'English' system (the only two systems which have a certification procedure). There were a total of 19 graduates in the four levels of the Sanskrit system, and 225 graduates in the four levels of the English system. As each level must be completed before a student can be admitted to the next one, we can get some image of 'transitions' from one level to another even though I don't know exactly the years covered in each case.[17] Table 5 displays these numbers.

Table 5: Sanskrit and English Schooling Graduate Transitions by Gender

	Sanskrit Graduates[18]				"English" Graduates[19]			
Sex	PM	UM	SH	ACH	SLC	IA	BA	MA
Male	19	12	10	2	225	172	72	9
Female					25	21	5	
Total	19	12	10	2	250	193	77	9

[17] At each of the four levels, the number of students who completed that level only and did not continue to the next level was, for the Sanskrit system 7, 2, 8, and 2 males and no females, and for the English system 53, 100, 63, and 9 males and 4, 16, 5 and 0 females.

[18] In the Sanskrit system Purva Madhyama (PM) is the first level of education, Uttar Madhyama (UM) is the second level, Shastri (SH) is the third level, and Acharya (ACH) is the fourth level, with the letters used for each system being my own invention.

[19] In the English system the Secondary Leaving Certificate (SLC) after grade 10 is the first level, the Intermediate certificate following two years of university is the second level, the BA or Bachelors degree (previously called a diploma) after two more years of university is the third level, and the MA or masters degree (previously called 'the degree') which requires two additional years is the fourth level. All these levels are obtained through the writing of centralized exams so that everyone in the country who obtains these levels has written the same exam.

Sanskrit n=19 males; English n=225 males and 25 females.

The total number of Sanskrit graduates represented by these figures is 19, and the total number of English graduates is 250. It is interesting to note that almost 1/3 of the Sanskrit students do not continue to level two wheras almost all of those who do continue to level three and very few continue to level four. In contrast, with the English school graduates over 1/5 do not continue to level two wheras less than 1/2 of those continue to level three. But like the Sanskrit school, a very small number complete level four after level three (about 12% compared to the Sanskrit 20%).

The Sanskrit school also differs from the 'English' school in having no women graduates, but even with the English system it is apparant that there are few women graduates, and the number declines from SLC level to zero at the master's level. Women came lately even in "English" education. It was only in 1981 (2038 VS) that the first woman, Indira Khanal who is Brahman graduated from secondary school. It may be a coincidence or through deliberate effort that her parents provided her with the opportunity to study, however the facts show that she had no brother and hence her parents selected her to be schooled. Kalpana Wagle and Manisha Wagle (also Brahman) were the second generation of women who received schooling in Bungkot, a few years later. They were given a chance to be schooled because their father himself was a schooled person. Only then did a wave of girls begin to come to school. Now there are many girls in school but the number decreases as the grades get higher. Most girls withdraw from school during the elementary years.

Dalits and Schooling Attainment

What is not visible in the numbers of Table 5 is the caste distribution of the graduates. The Sanskrit graduates are not only all males, but solely from the Brahman caste. Thus despite the fact some of the teachers whose vignettes were presented above taught *Dalits* in their Sanskrit classes, it appears no one went onto examination level work in Sanskrit. From the English schools there are however a few graduates, but very few despite the substantial efforts of Prem Bahadur Thapa Magar and Mitra Lal Shrestha in the 1940s. The first Sarki SLC graduate (Khadkaveer Singh), a male, completed high school in 1979 (2036 VS) and has now finished his I. A. It was ten years later before a second completed, Yam Bahadur Makrati who completed high school in 1989 (2046 VS). From the Kami group, a male (Sher Bahadur Biswakarma) graduated with the SLC in 1987(2044 VS) and was a headmaster in a primary school for a couple of years, but from the Damai caste there has been no one who completed SLC. Curently two young men, a Kami and Sarki are in high school and planning to appear for their SLC exam. Thus, of the 250 graduates in 'English'

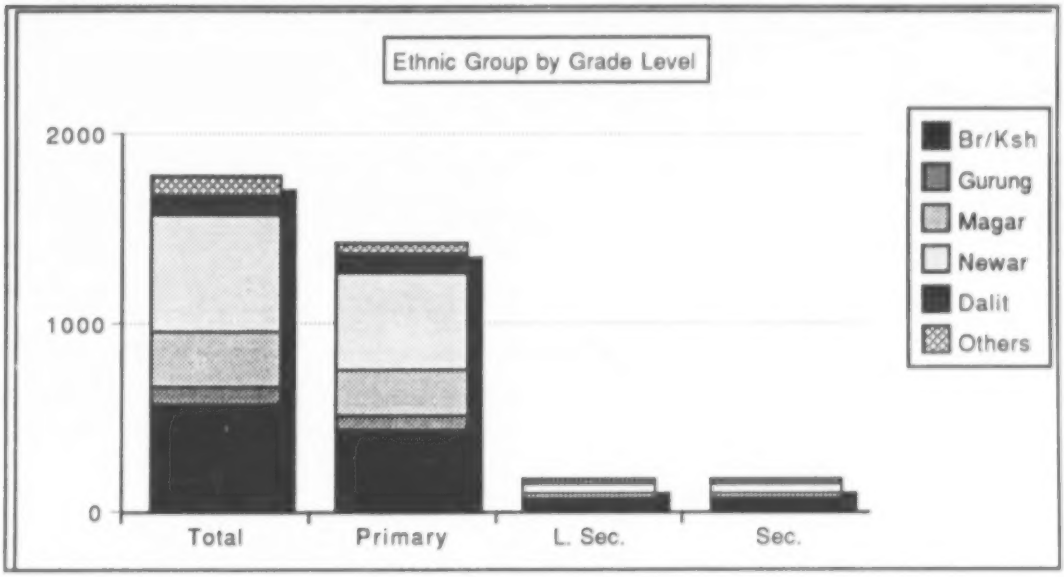
education from Bungkot, only three have been *Dalits* (about 1.25%) and all of these were males.

Among the woman of the *Dalit* caste, Menuka Biswakarma (Kami) known as Chhala Kumari in her village, was the first woman who appeared in an SLC exam and that was in the year 1995 (2051 VS) but unfortunately she could not pass it this time (the pass rate in the country is about 40%). Other woman who were in high school for some time were Ganga Pariyar (Damai), Sanumaya Makrati (Sarki), Sushila Biswakarma, a daughter-in-law (Kami), and Durgamaya Nepali (Damai) but they dropped from school prior to writing their SLC exam. Currently, there is one woman of a *Dalit* group namely Sukumaya Biswakarma (Kami) in high school, and one woman Gomawati Nepali, a daughter in-law (Sarki) who is reported to be in college.

Caste and School Enrollment

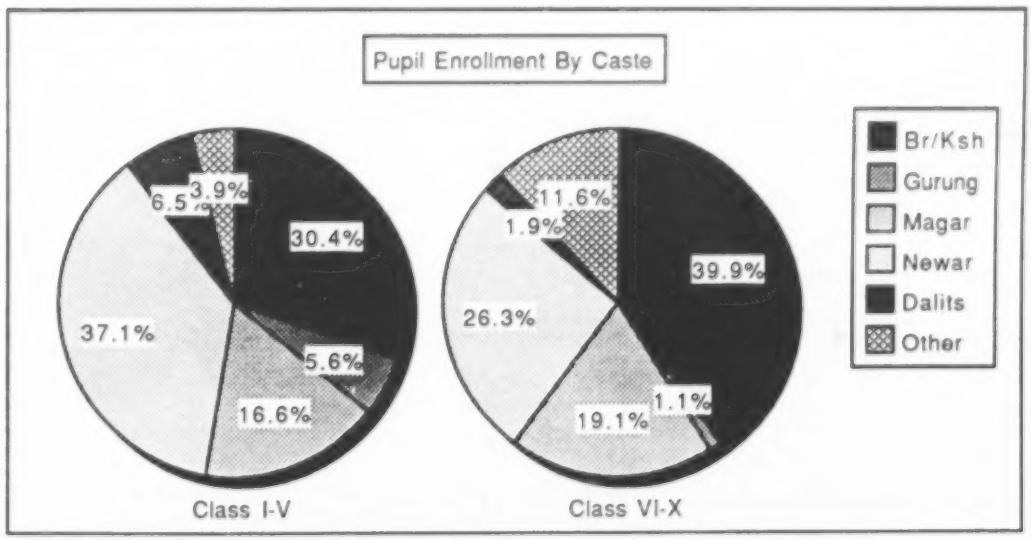
It proved an impossible task to find out the number of students enrolled in previous years, much less their caste status, since documents were not kept and there was no record. So I collected a list of all the students currently in school while I was in Bungkot in order to get a picture of school enrollment patterns by caste and gender. There are 1799 pupils currently enrolled in the nine schools of Bungkot. Of these pupils, 581 are Brahmin or Kshatriya, 84 are Gurung, 307 are Magar, 629 are Newar and 100 are *Dalits*; the rest, 98 are from various other caste groups. However, for all groups enrollment drops steeply from class (grade) one to two (total enrollment by grade drops from 458 to 287), then somewhat more slowly to class five where it again takes a steep drop to class 6 (from 212 to 109). This enrollment and withdrawal pattern and the ethnic/caste composition of the school population can be seen in the following bar graph:

Figure 3: School Enrollment of Ethnic/Caste Groups by Grade Level



Although enrollment in each grade after primary school continues downward in a somewhat uneven pattern, it is possible to both get some sense of school participation by caste and by level if the school population is dichotomized between the first and last five years of school. The following pie-charts display the relationship among the castes at each level and the change in caste compostion at the higher levels compared to the lower.

Figure 4: Caste/Ethnic Status and Schooling Level



A quick comparison to the population data for Bungkot provided above (Figure 1, p. 58) gives some idea of the over-representation and under-representation of castes in the schools, although it is not a perfect comparison because it does not reflect differences in the numbers of children each caste may have. For example, wheras 10% of Bungkot's population is *Dalit*, only 6.5% of the Class I-V pupils are *Dalit*, and 1.9% of the class VI-X pupils. In contrast, the 27% who are Brahmin and Kshatriya contribute over 30% of the Class I-V pupils and almost 40% of the Class VI-X, wheras the Newars show an even stronger 'over-representation' in the early years of school with their 28% of the population contributing 37% of Class I-V pupils but dropping close to their population at just over 26% of the higher grade pupils.

The graphs here do not display the gender differences in the data, but in brief in all caste groups boys outnumber girls in almost every class, and in most cases far outnumber them. Interestingly, in class 10 there is, however, a near equality of boys and girls in every caste with 31 boys and 27 girls making up the total of 58 pupils. However, by this level there are zero boys and girls from the *Dalit* castes still attending school. Some of the *Dalit* parents whom I talked with reported to me that they could not let their children go to school anymore because they had to go for *Nimek* (wage earning) if they were 15 or so, and before that age they were needed either as a free baby sitter or free child laborer for domestic work. *Dalit* parents also said that they were desperately poor to afford dress for school, copy, and pencil for their children.

Other Forms of School Participation

There are many ways that people in a community can participate in schooling besides being pupils. It was noted in the history section of this chapter that mostly Brahmins were involved in early teaching, and that those who took leadership in the establishment of schools included men from all castes except the *Dalit* castes. If we look at the caste composition of the teachers and the participation on school management committees we see a similar pattern.

There are altogether 52 teachers including 7 females in the schools of Bungkot VDC; by caste there are 32 Brahmans, 7 Kshatriyas, 5 Newar , 3 Gurungs, and a Kayastha. On the other hand, there were 1153 households of these caste people of which Brahmans 222; Kshatriyas 93; Newars 319; and Gurungs 43. These comparative figure are further evidence that Brahmans, perhaps because of their cultural capital in relation to schooling, were ahead of other castes in making teaching their profession. Currently, none of the

Magars were teachers in this village since, according to an old Magar, they preferred to join the army (*Mudna*[20] in local slang). But in the case of the *Dalit* community, wheras there are 115 households, Damai 35; Kami 19; and Sarki 62, residing in ward No. 1, 3, 5, 8, and 9, no one from this community was found employed as a teacher. Only Sher Bahadur Biswakarma had been a primary school teacher for a couple of years, until he was replaced by a permanent teacher by the district headquarters at Gorkha Bazaar because Sher Bahadur did not do well in the interview for teacher selection.

A similar situation occurs with the School Management Committees. I examined all the names of the members of the School Management Committee (SMC) and found that there were 13 Brahmans, 7 Kshatriyas, 12 Newars, one Gurung, and 8 Magars. In this case the Magars are considerably more represented than in the teaching staff but again none of the schools (out of nine) had a *Dalit* as a member for the SMC. This was usually attributed to their social and educational deprivation but when I asked a Sarki man, who was active in his community, about the reasons why were there no *Dalits* in SMC he said "ask the high caste people of this village." I followed his advice and talked to a Kshatriya SMC member about the representation of *Dalits* in SMC. He said "well these people don't know anything about school management. We have to do everything for them, even compel them to send their children to school." What I gathered from this discussion was that there was no trend to democratize the process of organizing SMCs. By regulation, the selection procedure for SMC member was confined to the head teacher, chairperson of the ward where the school was located, and the chairperson of the VDC. The lack of *Dalits* in the teaching profession and their inability to win elections ensures they would not sit on School Management Committees. And the attitude of those who were in such positions ensured that no one ever thought to ask people such as *Dalits* to take part in major decisions about schooling, though they could affect their life.

Summary

The Bungkot Village Development Committee in which the *Dalits* of this study live is primarily a farming village in the hilly region of Nepal. The caste system in which *Dalits* are the least respected caste is present here as elsewhere in Gorkha District and Nepal, but with more Newars and Magars and fewer *Dalits* than average this is likely a slightly wealthier community than many others. Both the non-*Dalits* and *Dalits* display extensive knowledge of the caste system, the Hindu explanations of origins of the castes, and the

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[20] Mudna means to turn left or right, which means to be employed as an army personnel.

'reasons' or legitimations for some castes to have greater respect than others, a knowledge clearly acquired through non-formal educational means. The economic and land base of the *Dalits* is also, on average, weaker than that of other caste members and they have traditionally sought wage labour from others in the community. Transitions in the economy are somewhat widening their occupational choices, and these newer occupations provide better incomes than the traditional ones. At the same time some other caste members are indicating that they might (and do) change their behaviour towards *Dalits* if they are well schooled and 'change their caste behaviour'.

But in educational terms the *Dalits* remain by far the least successful of the caste groups: denied Brahmanic (religious) knowledge in the traditional education system they did nevertheless occasionally have access to Sanskrit, Nepali, and practical education such as income generating knowledge. The more recent 'English' school system seems to open doors for them, and the majority of *Dalit* children at least start school today. But they remain markedly under-repesented at higher levels of schooling, from secondary to university, and girls remain so even more than boys as no *Dalit* woman from Bungkot has yet obtained an SLC pass.

How is this situation experienced and understood by the *Dalit* community itself? How do they perceive it in relation to their caste postion and other aspects of their life in Bungkot? The next chapter turns to explore the interview material obtained from *Dalits* during the field work period.

Chapter VI
Schooling and the *Dalit* Community of Bungkot

As I entered Bungot village and began to talk with people about schooling, the question of how schooling had expanded and become integrated or not integrated into the lives of *Dalits* was initiallly uppermost in my mind. But I knew to understand that I would need to understand as much as possible about their lives, and especially their life within a caste system and their ways of making a living. Then I needed to know how they thought about school, what their perceptions of it were, what they thought schooling could do for them, and how they or their children experienced schools and schooling. It is on this basis that I reframed my research focus to one of exploring the relationship beteween the Dalits and schooling, the way that relationship is influenced by the caste system, and the way both Dalits and others understand and explain that relationship.

In the last chapter this relationship was explored primarily through historical documents, including Hindu documents related to caste, available data, survey data from a community survey, and other data gathered as part of this research. The *Dalits* were placed in the context of a history of schooling in Bungkot, and the context of a larger caste structure in which there were differences in school performance for each caste, as well as gender differences. They also spoke to their own experience with caste and the 'non-formal educational knowledge' which taught them their 'place' in the society and the Hindu cosmology which explained that place. It is apparent from these documents, as the literature reviewed in Chapter II would predict that both in terms of school enrollment and levels of 'attainment' or highest grade of schooling, the *Dalit* communities overall fare very badly in schools (despite the occasional success story).

This chapter turns away from such data and primarily to what the *Dalits* themselves think and feel about their experience with schooling. To identify the themes, the overall pattern of their comments, I worked with the text from their interviews and 'set aside' the theoretical discussion, as described in the methodology chapter. But given the orientation I took into the research, it is perhaps not surprising that three major themes are expressed in my conversations with them about schooling; their experiences as *Dalit* castes, their experience as *Dalits* doing specific kinds of work or productive labour, and a discussion of schooling itself (of what happened to themselves and their children in schools, and what schools needed to do differently to enable their children to be more successsful there). A fourth theme, also partly a result of the kinds of questions I raised, was the place that school has had and continues to have in changing *Dalit* lives. Within each of these major themes there were a number of sub-themes which helped to clarify the world of education and village life for Dalits.

Caste, Untouchability and Schooling

Learning the *Dalits* caste position through socialization or non-formal education was described by Shekhar and presented in Chapter V; Shekhar emphasizes the learning occuring in village and home, and that it was primarily there he learned "...that the high caste society hates us" and that "...the Brahman hates us more than any other caste groups" but he also observes that in village and in school these and other things "made me more confined to my caste group people" (supra: p: 60).

Yet as I met with schooled *Dalits* in the village they constantly challenged the continuation of the caste behaviour their ancestors experienced. Wherever I went in the *Dalit* community and whoever I talked to, if they were schooled, they always showed their concern with why they were treated as non-touchable. What was the mistake they committed? Why were they debarred from touching high caste people? I shared my understanding as to the creation of caste culture and they shared the nature of non-touchability in the village, how it was expressed in their lives. According to them, historically a Bungkote *Dalit* was not supposed to talk with high caste people face to face. They had to let the high caste people go first if they happened to cross some one on their way while walking. In that situation, a *Dalit* had to say Jadau[1] by putting the right hand to his or her forehead. Similarly, *Dalits* had their own water well or water tap or whatever source of water they used; they could not drink from the water supplies of other castes and the high caste people would not drink water from their well or tap.

A *Dalit*, historically, could not enter into a high caste home. Wheras others would be received as honoured guests, next to the God in respect, they were supposed to stay out of the home no matter if it was shivering cold or boiling hot outside. Besides, no one of the high caste persons would sit on the same mat, bench, or plank with them. Touching a *Dalit* was taboo. If somebody from a high caste mistakenly touched a Dalit he or she had to take a holy bath or sprinkle water over themselves (*chhoichhito*). Yet, despite these taboos and ways of separating the castes, there were times when some Dalit castes might be considered good luck. For example, a Damai was considered the best person to see at the time of departure. The next best person was a Sarki but a Kami was never accepted that way. One could argue perhaps that Damai sews clothes and a Sarki makes shoes and both of these things are indispensable at the time of some one's departure. A Kami, on the other hand, makes iron equipment ... whatever the reason he was considered as the worst person to see

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[1] A word of casual greeting, like 'hi', used by Damai, Kami and Sarki when speaking to high caste people.

at the time of departure. High caste people believed that the look of a Kami always brought evil to their work.

These humiliating traditions, that I have also observed in my home village as well as many other villages I have visited in Nepal, were eroding gradually with the growing number of schooled people in both the high caste and the *Dalit* community. Some of these traditions were already gone with the expansion of schooling in Bungkot *Dalit* community.

> Tilak:- There is a change in social values because of the education. Many schooled Brahmans began to eat chicken, but their community did not degrade them and change them into a lower caste though they violated a caste rule. So this education has dismantled the Varnashram system. As a result of all these happenings, there is a change in the caste culture. (Discussion date:- 6-3-2052 VS or 20 June 1995)

This change observed by Tilak and many others is attributed to schooling here, although Bungkote realize it is not just schooling that has introduced such changes. Neither the curricular content nor the pedagogical process is credited for the gradual change in the caste system which seems to be associated with schooling. Instead it is the ability of the *Dalits* to read books, the power of information they hold, the political freedom, and the role of political parties in raising village awareness ("awakening") that bring people to this position.

> Kedar:- I have found the schooled person better in many respects. In the days of ours, when I was young, when there were no schooling as such we had a tradition of *Chhoichhito* but now it is gone for ever with the increased schooling both in our community and the community of the high caste family.
>
> When we came in contact with the religious books we gathered information on various things. We began to question both our doings and the doings of the rest of the society. Now we can ask the high caste people why are we called untouchable? What did we do to harm the high caste people and hence we have been treated as untouchable? (Discussion date:- 12-3-2052 VS or 26 June 1995)

But schooling is not only seen as something which has contributed to such changes, the schooled person is given special responsibility to further those changes.

> Priti:-We eat pork. If this is the reason that we became untouchable why is a pork eating Brahman still touchable? Similarly if some one thinks that we eat beef and hence we are untouchable then how is a Bhote (who eats beef) touchable in the high caste community? We expect a schooled person like you have to tell these kind of things to our society and help change Nepali society. (Discussion date:- 19-2-2052 VS or 2 June 1995)

I found none of the *Dalits* in Bungkot saying *Jadau* to high caste people, nor was there any tradition of clearing the road for high caste people. Almost all of the schooled people were

found sitting on the same mat or bench with *Dalits* and drinking water from the same water tap or water jar. Furthermore, there were some high caste people who used to eat in *Dalits'* homes without hesitation and there were some others who did not like to let others know about it, but themselves were comfortable in eating with *Dalits*. Thus, schooling had become a means to raise questions against the age old tradition of non-touchability and take a bold step to gradually integrate the *Dalit* community with the high caste community. But the transformation of the whole community is yet to be done. Goma speaks of the continuation of caste culture in the community, even though it is being reduced in school. She says:

> Now a days, the tradition of *Chhoichhito* (sprinkling water to purify one after he or she touches an untouchable) has gone. My friends of all castes eat with me. We share food and water. But when we go for social ceremonies even my friends hesitate to eat with me. I think they are scared with their parents and relatives present who are still reluctant to accept we *Dalits* as equal to them. What kind of rule is this? These reluctant persons eat with their daughters and sons who eat with *Dalits* in school. But they are reluctant to eat with us. Are not their daughters and sons impure once they eat with us? Did they not eat with me? Why are *Dalits* regarded as impure? What did we do to be called impure?
>
> Everybody knows if we cut our hand we have red blood to flow. The high caste people have also red blood. We do not have black blood. Do we? If the high caste people touch *Dalits* do they get deadly infection in their hand? If yes, we will be happy to be untouchable. Otherwise you sir have to tell me why we are untouchable.

Thus does Goma support the Brahmin school teachers quoted in the previous chapter (supra p.61) in observing that these changes which individuals display in caste behaviour are still not widely accepted in the community, that many schooled people are willing and able to break old taboos but they don't want their families and neighbors to know about it, or somehow they cannot engage in the same behaviour where many others may see them. Perhaps her reference to 'social ceremonies' is also significant, in that ceremonies are likely to carry traditional ways of behaving in their expression wheras new social groupings associated with school and work may make it easier to adopt new ways of behaving.

Schooling is also seen as related to changes in caste and castism in ways that are not related to religious knowledge, and are less likely to be shaped by ceremony or tradition. That is, not only do schooled people seem able to set aside old patterns of who they associate with, they also seem to reshape castism by being associated with new forms of status, status related to employment and perhaps to education itself.

> Tek:- Schooling changed the idea of castism. Once we were not supposed to eat with Gaine but now we have begun to eat with them. So is the case of Brahman's with us, some schooled Brahmans come to us and eat with

> us. Again a schooled Kami is equal to other high caste people if he/she is an officer or a teacher. To me, it's necessary to develop humanism rather than castism. I believe all of the caste people are equal.(Discussion date:- 24-2-2052 VS or 7 June 1995)

Yamuna and Lalita make the same point as Tek but extends it further...schooling can make a difference not just to ritual behaviour but the way *Dalits* are treated on a daily basis. It would seem from their remarks that if all the people in their community were schooled, they could all achieve the same status as those observed around them who the high caste people now treat well. At least, this is what their observations lead them to believe. Kamal picks up the notion, certain that schooling would change the situation for the Sarki people.

> Yamuna: If we *Dalits* were schooled, it is sure, no one would have hated us. I will tell you the truth. There are some Damai, Kami, and Sarki families in Bungkot who are schooled families. You know no one in this village even the high caste people dare to scuff them, threaten them, or cheat them. The high caste people are good to these schooled *Dalits*. So I think schooling is important to our community. (Date of discussion:– 1-3-2052 or 15 June 1995)
>
> Lalita:- His (referring to a Sarki) five years of schooling could make a difference in the life style of his children. They are no more untouchable in this village because they hardly come home, and when they come home, no one dares to tell them that they are untouchable. His children are also employed. Some of them are in Kathmandu and others in Gorkha Bazaar. (Discussion date: 8-2-2052 VS 22 May 1995)
>
> Kamal:-I realize that education is a bright sun. It opens the eyes of our children. Now I know the reason why my caste (Sarki) people are backward. It is the lack of schooling I believe. (Date of discussion:- 5-2-2052 VS or 19 May 1995)

This overall belief, clearly grounded in observation and experience, that schooling makes a difference in the caste culture of the community, was very widely shared among the *Dalits* of Bungkot as well as others. In Tek's description it seems there is some change in behaviour associated generally with schooling, but there is also a change because of a changed occupational status, people becoming 'officers or teachers' (in the public service or teaching service). In Yamuna's and Lalita's description it seems to be that schooling forces, in some way, the high caste people to treat their community differently; in Kamal's description we hear something more like the Sanskritization position...we who are Sarkhi lack something, we are backward, and therefore we are treated badly. If we had schooling it would change us, we would no longer be backward and we would receive (perhaps only then deserve?) better treatment.

Sometimes this belief that schooling would change the life of Dalits was expressed in such strong terms, it was as if school had become the new religion, school could function as did Dharma throughout cosmic history.

> Lalit:- I think this (school) is a place where people get education and that education makes a person different from what he was in the community life. I think it is a place for rebirth. Schooled persons always live in heaven and the unschooled person in hell. So school is a place where our children learn the way to go to heaven from hell. (Date: 15-2-2052 VS or 29 May 1995)

With this description Lalit calls up the caste way of speaking, a process of rebirth which occurs not after death but within life, and a rebirth which assures a better life but not possibly a worse life, not a rebirth lower in the caste scale. Although her language is suggestive, no doubt she would not mean to imply she sees school as 'like religion', rather she is simply speaking in a colourful metaphor to present her observations of the place of school in the life of people in her community.

But there are other connections between caste and schooling, connections which run in different ways from generation to generation. Dinesh, once a child who wanted to go to school was refused by his father and decided he would behave differently as a father; Netra a woman who desperately wants her children to go to school is refused by her children:

> Dinesh:- When I had to quit school I was mad at my father, I still remember what he said to me in response. He said "If someone press your lips it starts milking (meaning you are very young) but you think you are in a state that you can question me, why I don't allow you to go to school?" Then my father ordered my mom not be give me food to eat. From then on, I never dared to go to school, but I decided when I will be a father I'll send my children to school. (Date of discussion:–24-2-2052 VS or 7 June 1995)
>
> Netra:- I had a great desire to send my children to school because long ago I was a political person who fought for the establishment of democracy in this country. But you know I found that the children of a Sarki do not want to study. They are different from high caste people. My pious wish to make my children educated did nothing to keep my children in school. My elder son quit school for Nagaland, India when he was in grade three. So did my second son who is in Delhi these days. He got just two years of schooling in Nepal. Now my elder son writes me telling that I have to send his siblings to school otherwise they will suffer throughout their life. My elder son now claims that he is suffering because of the low level of schooling that he possesses. (Date of discussion:–18-2-2052 VS or 1 June 1995)

And Bidur, while describing advantages of schooling for himself also speaks of the school's response to the low caste children, the difficulties they face in the school and argues that teachers need to do something else to help them in the caste context:

> Bidur:- My schooling has made me able to understand my ability to do something. I have self confidence. I can argue with every body if I am not satisfied. I do not feel that I am untouchable. If someone says me that you are untouchable I definitely argue against him or her. But what can I do with these small children. I feel sorry to them. They are children but I do expect that the teacher has to do something in order to change the attitude of the children against untouchability. I am, I know, I am sure that I can tell

people that Damai are no more untouchables. (Date of discussion: 2-3-2052 VS or 16 June 1995)

There is one other thematic which is frequently expressed about how schooling is associated with caste relationships. Goma alludes to it above when she makes the Shylock like comment about the blood of *Dalits*, and speaks of having friends from all castes who eat with her. That is, schooling is not only associated with behaviour changes around caste, but the creation of cross-caste social relationships, friendships which would have been impossible in the historic and traditional way of living in the village.

> Shekhar: Schooling has made me able to find friends of higher caste people other than my own caste friends. I'll tell you I have a Newar friend who is a nail to flesh for me. We eat together and do everything together. We forget that we belong to two caste groups. (Discussion date:- 5-3-2052 VS or 19 June 1995)

Thus do *Dalits* speak in many ways of the complex relationship between caste and schooling. Caste behaviour in the village is changing, changing for the better for them, and this seems to be associated with schooling; schooling offers hope for escape from castism and gives them confidence and knowledge to challenge the chains of old caste beliefs; schooling enables people from their community to find work away from the village so on their return other villagers do not dare treat them in caste terms. Although there is caution about attributing all this to schooling, the hope which is placed in schooling stands out in almost all their remarks. Yet caste behavior remains strong in some respects. Often *Dalit* children do not want to go to school even if their parents wish them to go. And there is allusion to other problems in school. Despite greater inter-caste friendships and other benefits of schooling, *Dalit* children often do not get what they need there. This issue will be explored in more detail later in this chapter, after a focus on schooling and work in the next section.

Schooling for Labour: Employment and Occupational Shift

Schooling for almost all *Dalits* is equated with employment, better employment, different employment, employment which yields a higher income and better status in life. Dore (1976) was probably right when he argued "education conditioned people to become employees" A study done in India (Goyal, 1981) supports this idea when his *Harijan* respondent, who was a primary school graduate, aspired to "service what else" after schooling (that is, not only to be an employee but to be employed in the state sector). The Nepali *Dalits*, as Scudder and Colson (1980) found in the Gwembe society in Zambia, and Pardhan (1995) among Ismaili Muslim women in Booni valley of Pakistan, were tempted

to urban employment because they saw their future more in town and in urban centers than their home village.

Some of this image of a future life was related to the difficulty of the kind of labour they did, and the belief that schooling enabled one to find an easier job and an easier life, and some to the idea that schooling enabled *Dalits* to escape the limitations and status position of their caste occupation.

> Mohan:- We men have a life like an animal. We carry loads like an ox, we work for others like a bee, but (even so) we get contempt from high caste people. So I have decided to send my children to school so that they can change their life to an easy life. (Date of discussion:- 3-3-2052 VS or 17 June 1995).
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> Kali: Unschooled *Dalits* earn money by carrying a load of stone tablets on their back but a schooled *Dalit* is a contractor to supply those stone tablets. At least, a schooled *Dalit* has an easy life and more money in comparison with an unschooled *Dalit*. (Date of discussion: 17-2-2052 VS or 31 May 1995)

School again is seen as enabling one to escape not only from caste position but escape from a tough life... and escape to an easy life. How could schooling do this? What was the nature of schooling that made this possible? Maya's has a story-like way of describing the image of schooling which is behind this 'change' role of schools:

> Maya:- (Bringing her analogy) we are schooled to have a big plate of *Dhindo* (food from corn floor), we write with our sickle instead of your pen, we collect our writings in a *Doko* (a big basket to carry loads) and we use that which we collect in *Dundh* (a place to feed cattle) of a cow. It was our school in my maternal home and still it is my school in my husband's home, but we want to change our way of life by schooling our children. Because we have seen many schooled people who have changed their traditional life once they were schooled. (Date of discussion:-3-3-2052 VS or 17 June 1995)

She does not say exactly how this happens, but the 'schooling' of the family with work at its core is much different than the schooling of schools. The learning which occurs in the family leads to the traditional life, the traditional occupation, the learning which occurs in school leads to a different life, a changed life for the children and the whole family. There is no suggestion here, nor in Mohan's comment, that schooling enables the children to be more productive in farming or in the caste occupations, the family occupations.. Rather somehow schooling is linked to something that is done with pen and paper. However others in the Dalit community did speak to the idea of a 'productive' role for schooling.

> Kabi:- It is interesting to tell you why people (in the Sarki community) want to study. You might have seen rice fields in the month of June in Gorkha. Is this not a boon of schooling? I think yes it is. So is the case with chemical fertilizer, or improved seeds. So a farmer also needs schooling in

order to produce more money and support the family. So schooling in order to improve our status is a kind of medicine to a sick person like *Dalit*. (Date of discussion:- 8-2-2052 or 22 May 1995)

Unlike Maya's image, Kabi is one of the few people who thought schooling could lead to more productive labour for a Dalit within age-old areas of work, to better agricultural production and a better living, and through this to better status for the family. No one suggests the same for the age-old trades of the Dalits, except perhaps the Damais trade and this change is not linked to schooling. The traditional skills of the *Dalit* castes could not pay them financially nor could they become a prestigious occupation. One of the former members of the educational planning commission made the argument that *Dalits* as trade persons, educationists as intellectually biased persons, and culture as elite oriented could not make the *Dalit's* occupation prestigious and hence they were forced to leave the village once they were schooled.

Amar:- The *Dalit* community is a trade community, but their technical ideas and knowledge never had a chance to be modernized. Both the Sanskrit and the modern education system did not value the skill of a *Dalit* community in Nepal. Instead these educational systems promoted intellectual thinking. I do not want to blame English education as such but I am pretty sure that this system also promoted intellectual thinking as a heritage to the Sanskrit system of education in Nepal. This made *Dalits'* trade an occupation of backward people. And the *Dalits* who were schooled under the English education system also became elite oriented and discontinued their parental occupation. Thus, the trade skill of the grassroots people did not get a chance to be modernized. In other words, our schooling could not modernize the *Dalit's* traditional trades. There are some exceptions like Akalman Nakarmi who developed his traditional occupation (iron work) into a welding company. But there are no such cobblers, or blacksmiths, who followed Akalman. (Interview date:- 8-4-2052 VS or 24 July 1995)

Shambhu too comments that schooling does not contribute to greater production in the village. He was not a *Dalit* but a Brahman who always talked about the misery of down trodden people like the *Dalits*. It was partly because he was born in the village, raised there, and worked in a village school until he retired; and partly because he had seen the life of the *Dalits*. Besides, he was a left political thinker. In his long observation, schooling had done many good things to the *Dalit* community, however, there were some bad things that were subject to criticism.

Shambhu:- Schooling has invited new technology into the villages, however, our schooling is not that productive. I think this is the area which we have to think about. I'll tell you we have coca-cola available in this village but we do not have a bottle of milk instead of a coca-cola bottle. Our schooled persons are addicted to coca-cola rather than a bottle of milk. Maybe they think that a *Thulo Manchhe* always drinks coca-cola not milk. So they prefer coca-cola. (Discussion date:- 5-3-2052 or 19 June 1995)

A 'big man' always drinks coca-cola not milk. Schooling is not contributing to production, to an upgrading of traditional trades, but to students' desires to become 'big men' and to do the things that big men do. Shambhu seems to be an astute and sympathetic observer of the *Dalit* world, but perhaps he needs to look not only at production in economic terms but also at caste and status production (social reproduction), for it is here that the Dalits speak most clearly about why they want their children schooled. What they could visualize for their children once they were schooled was a bright future and non-traditional avenues for earning money .

> Shiva:- Once a person is schooled he or she does not stick to the traditional profession. They choose a new profession because the old and the traditional profession (cobbler, shoemaker) of a Sarki caste did not give them social respect. The same is the case with the profession (blacksmith) of a Kami. But the profession (tailor, musician) of a Damai is no more hateful. All of the caste people are coming to this profession. You can understand why it is so. In my opinion, a Sarki and a Kami have to work in dirt and have to do a lot of physical work in comparison with a Damai. So people have never shown respect for a Kami and a Sarki's profession. These professions are dying with the increased number of the schooled *Dalits*. (Discussion date:- 4-3-2052 VS or 18 June 1995)
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> Dip:- My children also go to school. Once they are in school they felt awkward to do the parental profession. Maybe, they are used to wearing clean clothes, but we can't wear clean clothes in our *Aaran* (blackmith workshop) and they can't wear dirty clothes in school. The second thing is that they have friends from the high caste people. So my children do not want to show their friends that they work in our *Aaran*. Because of their inhibition to come to the *Aaran*, I never encouraged my sons to work in this *Aaran*. Again my children are good at their studies. So I never encouraged them to come to my *Aaran* and help me. However they do come to me if I require their help. (Discussion date:- 17-2-2052 VS or 31 May 1995)

The old and traditional occupations do not lead to respect; once schooled the children feel ashamed to let their classmates and friends see them in that work, and they learn at school that clean clothes are important...except for the Damai caste professions the Dalit occupations are 'hateful'. The integral linking of the caste system with specific occupations means that the desire to improve one's position in life almost ensures a desire to change occupations, not to 'modernise' them. According to Shiva, for some reason independent of schooling, one caste occupation seems to be changing its position in the hierachy of respect so people are less anxious to flee it and in fact other castes are coming to it. This raises many questions about the place of sewing or tailoring in the community, international non-government agencies offering sewing classes to women, new sewing machines being used in the village...questions, not answers. But the fact is many people do want to learn sewing, to make the clothes they see worn in the cinema, and sometimes people sewing are

visited by important people like movie stars who want to buy clothes from them. No such things happen to the cobblers or blacksmiths.

But what kinds of occupations do they seek with schooling? Where do they find them? The most frequent story is that they go away, to Kathmandu or other large centres in Nepal, or to India, and they do wage labour, menial labour. But this is good labour, this is a better life than they had in the village.

> Yamuna:- If some one is schooled he or she has their eyes opened. They know the way to follow, to get employment no matter if it is highly paid or not. The schooled people of our (Damai) community, especially the males, have gone to India and to big cities in Nepal for a job. They are earning money and making their life easy. My father is one of them who is earning money in India. This makes us realize the importance of schooling in life. (Date of discussion:– 1-3-2052 or 15 June 1995)

Research in Nepal (Cerid, 1988), and outside (Toh, 1971) showed that schooling encouraged a brain drain, lured village youths to town, and they ended up with unemployment. If the migrants did well, they contributed to the new place they chose but the place of the person's origin would get no benefit from a schooled person. A former Vice-Chancellor of Tribhuwan university described the situation documented in this research in this fashion.

> Manish:- Most of the schooled people are in a state of "no where" from an employment perspective. They are socially alienated, economically failures unable to cope with a market economy, and unable to enjoy or be satisfied with a subsistence village economy. In all, the schooled person remains in a slippery place and the economy around them continues to limp. (Interview date:- 14-4-2052 VS or 30 July 1995)

Looking at the nation as a whole, he may very well be right. But Bungkote *Dalits* experience their situation differently. Because, as they reported to me, Bungkote *Dalits* had inadequate land to grow enough food to feed themselves for the whole year. An additional human resource (a son or brother) added to this already marginal piece of land which they owned, was a useless investment. Again, the economy of this village was based on sustainable farming but not farming with a marketable surplus. In this situation, a schooled *Dalit*, whose aspirations were going to be higher, had no alternative but to migrate from the village for a better economy. Besides, there were some *Dalits* who had experienced little or no caste culture in towns, even in Gorkha Bazaar, earned more money than they usually earned through *Nimek* in village, eaten good food in town, obtained good clothing to put on, and finally saved money for their family back home to solve their families hand to mouth problem. These kinds of experiences of a schooled *Dalit*, if we follow Watanabe's (1969) findings on brain drain from developing to developed countries, were

the result of motivational as well as permissive factors which drew them to towns and cities, and the lack of restrictive, restorative or compensatory measures to retain them in the village.

> Shiva:- We know that there is a little scope for all schooled persons to get jobs in this village. They have to go outside the village for a job. It is good for our community, because we have a small piece of land that can't grow adequate food to solve our hand to mouth problem. We can't get jobs for all in the village except *Nimek* especially in the agricultural season. Besides if the schooled person goes out of the village their family also gets a chance to go out of this village. This is a kind of outing for us. When we go out of our community, let us say to a city, no one will be there to tell us that we are untouchable. So we like to go to town with our children. (Discussion date:- 4-3-2052 VS or 18 June 1995)
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> Dinesh:- Schooled persons are migrating to the city area in search of a job. I think they do not have options in the village, but I have found that the schooled person, though they work out of their home village, come home once a year or so. They are always good to us. They, in coming home, collect money for the welfare of our community people. They have done good at both an individual and a community level. (Discussion date:- 4-3-2052 VS or 18 June 1995)

Thus, the occupational shift of the schooled *Dalits* has become a source of physical or geographic mobility, economic sufficiency to solve hand to mouth problem, educational exposure, and above all by reducing the magnitude of non-touchability, a source of integrating the Dalit community with the mainstream society from which it has been detached for centuries. In a community where production and human relations are culturally dislinked in ways which benefit the dominant high caste group, the schooled Bungkote Dalits occupational shift is not only a survival strategy for them but a path to a better and more satisfying life.

Yet, in many respects, geographic and occupational mobility preceded contemporary schooling in this village for many men have gone for generations to join the British army in India, the Gurkha regiments. At that time these men had little or no schooling, but their experience in far off places where there was much more schooling than the Nepal of their day, led them to be strong supporters of schooling in their home villages.

> Kamal:- I am proud of my father. He was a sergeant in the Indian Army. When he used to come home on leave he always encouraged us to be schooled. My mother understood his intention. So she sent us to school. My elder brother passed grade four and dropped out of school. It was that time when the *Dalit* community was not able to speak against the mainstream society and anyway he was weak in study. But for me, my father and my brother were the motivating force. It was at that time when there was a school in my village (so I did not need to go far to school).
>
> (Now) I have a good income, happy family, one wife and one son. On the other side you can see some of my relatives in this village. There are about 60 households. None of them are schooled at least in my generation. I go

to visit them sometimes. It's not my village by the way but there are my relatives. I always try to persuade them to go to school when I visit their village. (Date of discussion:- 5-2-2052 VS or 19 May 1995)

Schooled *Dalit* women in Bungkot have a different story to tell than their brothers because they have little chance to work outside their home environment and they, culturally, were hesitant to go to India or to big towns in Nepal in search of a job. A primary school graduate male of this community could seek an employment opportunity in India or in big towns in Nepal, but schooled *Dalit* women were simply thinking of being employed as a teacher, an adult literacy facilitator, or a paramedical worker in their own or nearby villages. However, to get such types of work was difficult for them, partly because they had a low level of education (less than SLC), partly because of their compulsory 'choice' to live in nearby villages, and partly because of what Dore (1976) calls qualification acceleration for that job. In this sense, school is producing an unemployed female labor force in the Bungkote *Dalit* community, although schooling had other ramifications for these women.

For boys and men however it seems that even small amounts of primary school improved their chances of gaining employment, mostly outside the village but sometimes in the village. They saw these opportunities as related to some general aspect of education, something which they learned or acquired from school and not that they learned how to 'do' the job at school.

Netra:- Schooling is the key to success for all of us. Once schooled, we can learn any of the skills very fast in comparison with unschooled people. We also can get employment if we are schooled. Take my own example. I got a little schooling in India. It helped me a lot in my carpentry business right here in my village. Now I can earn Rs. 50 -100 a day. This is my only source of income in order to support my family of ten. (Discussion date:- 18-2-2052 VS or 1 June 1995)

Kamal:- Yes, I know how to repair an umbrella, radio, flash light, and stove. I realize that I don't need more money to invest in my workshop. I learnt this skill while I was wandering in India in search of a job. You know I could learn these skills very fast because I was schooled. I don't think that schooling paid me directly. But it is my schooling that gave me a courage and interest to do something in my life. So I learnt a skill to earn. As a result of my doing that, I am able to put a golden ring on my finger and a watch on my wrist. My forefathers used to plow for the high caste people but I am not. I am on my own. (Discussion date:- 5-2-2052 VS or 19 May 1995)

Bidur:- You know I dropped from grade five, but I am going to be an electrician (meaning a person who does house wiring). My friend Surendra, by the way he is Magar, is training me free of charge. I am confident that once I get training in electrical wiring, I can go out of the village and earn my livelihood. (Date of discussion: 2-3-2052 VS or 16 June 1995)

Dalits in Bungkot experienced that schooling paid them directly and indirectly. Directly, they could gradually approach mainstream society, forge a link between their pre-capitalist agrarian society and the new economic world, bring cognitive changes, and improve their earnings (Eisemon, 1987). This situation encouraged many *Dalits* to leave the village and end up in the urban area. Since the Eastern society always hated the *Dalit's* occupation, the schooled *Dalit's* wanted a shift from it in order to live as non-hatred persons. The combination of the elite oriented culture and the schooling system promoted these *Dalits* to change their occupation away from that of their parents. They had evidence to tell me that those who shifted from their parental occupation were economically improving their status, socially getting respect, and mentally becoming satisfied.

In the past educational efforts had tried to break down the earlier caste mentality about occupations and make each one's occupation respectable. For example, from the early 1950s there was some vocational content added to the school curriculum. This effort gained momentum in the 1970s and in 1980s. But the concept of vocationalization of school curriculum could not survive against the age old "intellectual" tradition. Despite the fact that many Dalits seem happy with the jobs they can get with low levels of schooling, I would argue that many *Dalits* in Bungkot also echo this "intellectual" tradition.

> Kabi:- Because of my schooling, I sent all of my children to school. I can claim now that all of my children are literate. One of my sons was good at study. So he graduated from lower secondary school. He just married a woman who is an SLC graduate. Both of them are employed in a factory in Nepal. Now all of my sons and daughters are doing fine.
>
> Once I realized the importance of schooling, I began to tell my community people that you have to send children in school. But many of my illiterate community members don't take my advice seriously. They just tell me an old man who always talks for nothing. What do I do?(Discussion date:- 18-2-2052 VS or 1 June 1995)

Not only is there a hint of the superiority of 'intellectual' work in their words, there is a clear dream of a good job which might come with quite a lot of schooling. As the critical theorists found, schooling for Bungkote *Dalits* has become an instrument which develops their desire for white color jobs, and a means to look down on the traditional professions, and not only the traditional profession but even the traditional work of household work and child care.

> Sashi:- But for me I love to study more. Actually, I would like to pass the SLC exam. If I were an SLC graduate, I would have a different life, totally different than I have today. I would be a teacher in a primary school, teach my community people or the people of the high caste family. But unfortunately I am not. Now my schooling takes me nowhere. I just do my household chores. Again I have a daughter. She is just three years old.

> I have to take care of her. I don't have time to go to school. And also I have to go for a *Nimek* in order to get food for me and my daughter. My husband has gone to India. He is employed there. May be one day he will call me and I'll go there and be happy with him. Discussion date: 19-2-2052 VS 2 June 1995.

The dream in Sashi's words speaks not only to an ideal job, an ideal job for a man or a woman but especially for a woman who may live in her home community and be a teacher; it also speaks to something more bitter. The taste of reality in her mouth for she cannot afford to go to school, she must go to *Nimek* to get food for herself and her daughter. Amit notes a similar constraint, but this is the constraint of a poor father who would like to send his children to school and cannot for the need of their *Nimek* to contribute to the household.

> Amit:- We need schooling for our children in order to make them able to understand what others have said, what is happening in the world, where can we get better living, but we are desperately poor to provide food for our children. So we send them to school until they become able to go for *Nimek* (wage earning). That's it. (Date of Discussion:- 14-2-2052 or 28 May 1995)

Still, this kind of hope is powerfully expressed by many of the *Dalits* of Bungkot. Perhaps all do not see schooling as being like rebirth, leading to a good life for the person who completes schooling, but schooling is the place for hopes and dreams to come true. Madhu promises me that he will do all in his power to ensure that his children get schooling, invest everything his family has if necessary, even to disposing of traditional family lands.

> Madhu: I found that a schooled person has an easy life in comparison with unschooled person. They go out of the village and earn money. I am not schooled. So I have an illiterate wife but my younger brother is in school now. I am sure he will marry a schooled woman and make his life better than me.
>
> Since I could not a get chance to go to school for a long time I have wanted to send my children to school. I hope that they will be at least SLC graduates. If I have to sell all of my property in order to school my children I'll do that for sure. It is my promise to you. My son has started to go to school, but my daughter is very young. Anyway, I have promised in my mind that I'll send these children to school for sure. Their schooling will change their life. They will not be poor like me and they will not work in this *Aaran* (blacksmith's workshop) like me. (Date of discussion: 19-2-2052 VS or 2 June 1995)

Finally, still reflecting a strong image of a relationship beween schooling and work, Dalits see pragmatic value to schooling which goes beyond work but is somehow related to it.

> Madhu: If we study we gain knowledge. We can read signboards in a market, read the bus number, its destination, and its schedule. If I were schooled I would be employed for sure. Again if I were schooled I would

> have training for different types of income generating activities, because these income generating agencies always require a schooled person in order to make us understand their technical but written language. (Date of discussion: 19-2-2052 VS or 2 June 1995)
>
> Devi:- This is an age of education. You know I had a humiliating experience one time with a postman. He had a registered letter for me in his hand. It was my husband who sent me that letter from India. The postman asked me to sign my name in his peon-book so that he would have proof to tell his office that I got the letter from him. But I told the postman that I don't know how to write my name. The postman in response said to me, "What were you looking for all of your life?" It was a humiliating experience for me. From that day on, I made up my mind to join an adult literacy class and to send my children to school. (Date of discussion: (7-3-2052 or 21 June 1995).

Schooled *Dalits* in Bungkot knew that many of the people in their community were unschooled but those who were schooled used the basic skills acquired through schooling to gain employment and to manage in a world in which reading and writing are important. The basic skills, literacy and numeracy, were equally important to the *Dalit* community as they were to the Punams of Papua New Guinea (Carrier, 1984) regardless of whether the content of education was related to their life or not. Thus schooling was 'vocational' for them, even though it had little or no direct vocational content.

Still those *Dalits* who wanted employment near their village cultivated frustration since they had, in their words, no "qualifications to get a job."

> Dinesh:- As you know it is very difficult to get a job in these days. So one needs an influential relative, or a good qualification, or a political support of the party in power. In this situation, we have no such qualifications to get a job. I think this is the most frustrating part to all of the schooled *Dalits* who want to live in the home village or neighboring town like Gorkha Bazaar. (Discussion date:- 24-2-2052 VS or 7 June 1995)

Dinesh's statement is so different from the men who are happy with carpentering or becoming an electrician, the men who were satisfied with what they could earn and with what they could do in life with their minimum level of schooling, that it seems he is referring to different types of jobs, jobs such as teaching or 'service'. Although he includes a 'good qualification' in his list of what is needed to get these jobs, his other items suggest that 'we have no qualification' implies something different. Perhaps even if they have 'a good qualification' it is hard for the Dalits to get jobs because they lack contacts and powerful support in the society. Ogbu's (1978) notion of job ceiling seems appropriate in this case of Bungkote *Dalits*, who could not get jobs above a certain level at least partly because they were *Dalits*.

Dalit's Schooling and Village Development

Traditionally, the high caste people relied upon *Dalits* to do much of their work for them. A Damai would sew clothes and play music on auspicious ceremonies, a Kami was there to repair agricultural implements and kitchen utensils, and a Sarki had to prepare shoes for the villagers, and plow the field. Moreover, all of these *Dalits* were supposed to render their services to the villagers as a porter, or for other kinds of menial labor. *Dalit* women would dig the field, sow the seed, plant the field, and work as a porter.

Once, these *Dalits* began to go to school or send their children to school, many of them became reluctant to serve villagers traditionally. Gradually the traditional village structure of work and work relationships began to break down.

> Tekaraj:- *Tairani mairani kobharchha kuwako pani*? (if all are schooled who will do the work in this village?). It is the situation these days. We cannot get laborers in the agricultural season. We cannot work by ourselves. We need these *Dalits* to help us in our fields. But, you know, since they began to go to school they don't like to go for *Nimek*. Again the schooled *Dalits* go outside the village, especially in India, earn money and support their family. It is good for them. But you know we have problems plowing or digging our fields, and gaining benefit from our land. (Discussion Date:- 24-2-2052 or 7 June, 1995)

Tekaraj's case in Bungkot was not unique to him. There were many Tekarajs there who had that problem. Some of them began to plant fruit trees, others migrated to the southern plains for an easier life, and the rest shared Tekaraj's fate. Thus, the whole economy of the Bungkot VDC was being affected with the growing interest of *Dalits* in schooling. From the *Dalit's* point of view it is good because they now know the way to earn money but for others like Tekaraj who belonged to the high caste community it is counter productive to their traditional village life and economy.

There is apparently a form of village economic development occuring in which the old caste economic relations are at least different if not exactly transformed. *Dalits* with schooling are becoming carpenters and electricians, trades needed in a more 'modern' economy, and in some cases finding their income in Bungkot. Rarely they may even get a job in schooling or other service work that requires much schooling and at such times they are 'no longer treated like *Dalits'*. But agricultural production which relied on the *Dalits* for manual labour seems caught in the old caste relations which the *Dalits* need to change for they want to find respect and decent incomes in their lives. It seems that development in Bungkot in this area will require a new social dynamic or new technology to change the labour relationships, or school will continue to simply draw labour away from farm production. In fact, agricultural

work has not been 'caste' work even if agricultural *Nimek* has been, for all work in their own fields.

Schooling as an Institution in the Lives of *Dalits*

When the Dalits reflect on what actually happens with their children in school, many of them seem much more pessimistic about what it can and does do for them. Sometimes that pessimism reflects what they see as economic shortcomings in their lives, and sometimes the paradox of schooling and poverty: "No food no schooling at present and no schooling no food for our children in the future" said Madan, a Sarki man who had been in India for a decade and now back in his village. His profound belief in the importance of schooling for breadwinning enables his daughters to go to school, but all Dalits did not feel able to do the same.

> Ram:-We contributed our labor to build this school but we can't anymore afford school fees and other kinds of expenses. Because what we get we consume. We do not have a yearly surplus. In this situation we send our children to school. But the school teachers are not responsible for the education of our children. There is no regular class in school. This makes a problem for us. We lose two things at a time if there is no class in school; one, the education of our children, and two a *Doko* (a big basket) of grass that is supposed to be collected by our children. It drives us crazy but we can do nothing to stop it. We do not know who we should talk to about this situation, and anyway who will listen to us? (Date of discussion:- 17-2-2052 VS or 31 May 1995)
>
> Lalit:- We send our children to school, but they do not go regularly. You can find them under a shade of a mango tree collecting mangoes and eating them or you can find them on the bank of a stream for fishing. You know what? When they come with a kilo of a fish we feel happy because a kilo of a fish gives either Rs. 70.00 or food to eat in the home. So we do not really care if our children are in school or are fishing. On the other hand you can't find a single Brahman boy or girl doing that. Because we think they value education and we value food. That is why the children of the Brahmans are in school and our children are in the fishing spot.
>
> We *Dalits* are always busy for *Nimek* and our children are always busy for fishing or mango collecting. Who is here to understand our problem? I think no one is here to help our caste groups even our school teachers. (Date of discussion:- 15-2-2052 VS or 29 May 1995).

Thus despite the fact schooling is widely believed to be the key to future economic success, current economic hardships make it very difficult for *Dalits* to send their children to school. And when children go to schoo! and are not taught or provided with classes, the frustration is even greater for so much value of the child's labour has been foregone so he or she can attend school. Indeed, how can a parent scold a child who does not attend school and uses his time to contribute food for the family? Or even just eats his fill himself?

Although caste is mentioned in Lalit's comments, the overall tone is not one of caste discrimination but of economic differences, or social class differences, between her family and the Brahmin family. She suggests it is only possible to value education if there is already adequate food in the home, and for many of the *Dalits* that situation does not prevail. It is however, apparent from the earlier comments Dalits make about schooling, caste and work that many of them value education; what they often cannot do is tranlate that valuing into behaviour because of their economic constraints.

On the other hand Pura almost calls up the idea of culture conflict when he describes school realities and school problems:

> Puru:- My community people are poor and ignorant. Again our children are the first generation in this school. Because of this, they do not have friends to go to school with them, so they feel bored going to school. But the teachers are not thinking this way, they give all children the same blanket treatment. My point is that they are not giving special care to our children. So we are not in a position to get adequate benefit from this school.
>
> The next thing I realize is that the language we speak in our house sounds impolite in school. We are a little bit vulgar in speaking. When our children go to school they unconsciously speak our home language. This makes both the students of the high caste family and the teachers mad at our children. So they sometimes scold and spank our children. This makes our children reluctant to go to school and leads them to be left out from the school.
>
> Another thing is that we go for *Nimek* (wage labour). Sometimes we can't come in time to prepare food for our children. In this situation they have to go to school without food. No one is there to understand that a particular student is starving and hence he or she is inattentive in a class. And also many of our community people are unschooled. As a result we can not help our children to do their home work nor there is any provision to help our children in school. (Date of discussion:-24-2-2052 VS or 7 June 1995)

Here, in a situation of 'different cultures' Dalit children are made miserable in school; they lack friends, they speak 'rudely', they are scolded and even spanked for behaviour which is normal at home, and they are often hungry. If they were not in school, as with Lalit's children, they could solve their hunger by fishing or getting mangos, but they are in school and there is apparently no way for them to reduce their hunger, so they just suffer. Finally, although Puru does not say this exactly, with no one at home able to help with homework they are likely to have unhappy and failing experiences with school grades. The picture painted of the experience of schooling for these children is bleak indeed, and closely resembles the picture of the 'cultural conflict' literature on Canadian Indians (e.g.Wilson, 1990) or American Blacks (e.g. Ogbu and Gibson, 1991).

But the problem is not seen as simply one of 'cultural conflict' or economic hardships. The problem which Dalit children have in school is also seen by their parents as related to teachers doing their jobs badly, being irresponsible and uncaring in school.

> Shiva:- I am not satisfied with our school. The teachers are negligent towards their duties. They go to class if they like, if they do not like to go to class they just tell the students that it's holiday. Sometimes they tell us that the children of Damai, Kami and Sarki do not want to study. Who to blame? What can we do? We don't know what to teach and how to teach because we are illiterates. But the teachers who know all these things are not taking their responsibility for the education of our children. (Date of discussion:- 15-2-2052 VS or 28 May 1995).
>
> Bimal:- Who is making the mistakes we don't know but we do know that teachers are irresponsible. I am not talking for *Dalits* only. All the students are not well cared for by the teachers. If teachers were active and helpful to the students there would have been a change in the fate of our caste people., because this is not our *Jamana* (time, or the same time as for the parents). In our *Jamana* parents used to discourage us from schooling. They used to tell us "You are Sarki. What can a Sarki do even if he is schooled. You have to plow and do *Nimek* for others" Actually we did it. But this is not that *Jamana*. Now a Sarki can be a teacher or an officer and we know it. But the problem is that our children are not taking an interest in going to school and teachers are not shouldering their responsibility. (Date of discussion:- 15-2-2052 VS or 28 May 1995).
>
> Priti:-I think (in relation to poor school performance and attendence) it is not only our mistake that we take the children out of school but also the negligence of the teachers to teach our children in school. Because the teachers know that we can't help our children at home. So why don't they give special care to our children in school? The teachers know that we are poor and belong to a low caste and our children have no tradition to go to school as do other caste people. (Date of discussion:- 12-3-2052 VS or 26 June 1995).

One could easily understand why the Bungkote *Dalit* community reacted against the school teachers despite seeing schooling as "a great hope" for their children. In fact, perhaps they felt ever more anger towards teachers because they wanted and needed so much rather than because they gave no value to education. What did *Dalits* want from a teacher in order to school their children? My discussion with *Dalits* brought out some ideas such as the teachers should develop a mechanism to persuade parents to send their children, monitor the classroom attendance and talk with parents when children don't attend, be sure that each child has friends in the classroom, follow up on school achievement, and give value to what low caste parents say as well as ensuring they can visit school and participate there with their children. (Discussion with Madan, 8-2-2052 VS or 22 May 1995)

However, I interviewed some of the *Dalit* students, who are currently in schools and those who left school a couple of years ago, in order to know their experiences with and reactions to the school environment. These students did not find school a bad experience,

reported very positive relationships with other pupils in their classes and positive responses by teachers to situations of caste conflict.

> Shekhar:- In school, I found that all of my friends regardless of their caste were friendly. They did not scuff me nor did they think that I as a Kami would bring evil happenings to them. Yes, some times I had a dispute with the high caste people in school. In that time, some of my friends of the high caste family used to hate me, but I was also equally aggressive to them. I think this is the only time I used to realize that I was a person of a low caste family. Otherwise school was always a good place for me. (Date of discussion:- 5-3-2052 VS or 19 June 1995).
>
> Ashok:- No one in my class hates me because of my caste, Sarki. I sit together with them, on the same bench. You can come and see me in the classroom. All are friendly. I can go in the office and drink water from the same pitcher as a high caste student drinks. No one scoffs at me or my caste. I can show you if you would like to come in my school. (Date of discussion:- 17-2-2052 VS or 31 May 1995)
>
> Kamal:- I never faced difficulty in school life. My friends were good at me. But I remember a day in school which was painful to all *Dalit* students. Some of the students from the high caste raised their voices that *Dalits* should not be allowed to touch water pots in school. It became a debatable issue in our school. But we *Dalit* students were already united and we went to our headmaster. He was Brahman but he said to all high caste students "See, school is a temple of the Goddess Saraswati. Here, no one belongs to high or low caste. All are equal. So a *Dalit* student can touch a water pot and a student from a high caste community can drink water from it." After that it did not become an issue among students. We became touchable at least in my village school. (Date of discussion:- 5-2-2052 VS or 19 May 1995)

The discussions with the schooled *Dalits* implies that the school environment in Bungkot was friendly to them though there were some issues regarding non-touchability in the past. They told me that school was a good place for them to be with a high caste people and to forget the feeling that somebody belongs to a *Dalit* community. How is it possible that these students could tell stories about school so different from the adults who spoke before them? These students are high school students or have recently left high school. They are 'successful' students, students who got good enough grades in school to be able to pass and continue. It is possible that such successful students no longer suffer the effects of caste even as those who are 'successful' graduates with good jobs are no longer challenged about their caste membership. Or perhaps these are students who were able to have friends in school, who were able to speak or learn to speak in ways not heard as rude or vulgar by high caste children and teachers...perhaps their experience of schooling is actually very different from other children in their castes who do not do as well. The remarks of Kiran, a 16 year old Sarkhi partially support this interpretation, although they also point to the importance of his supportive mother.

> Kiran;- My mother is gentle. She has never been to school but she has seen Gorkha Bazaar where she learned the importance of education. Consequently, she started to send me to school. She has a hope that I will be an educated person, do at least SLC, get a job, earn money, and change the luck of our family. Who knows whether or not I can do it t? Also my playmates who are mostly Gurungs always encouraged me to stay in school.
>
> My mother is always kind to me. She told me "If education can open your eyes I ask you not to leave school. I will manage home and you keep on studying." My mother's saying that to me was a turning point in my life. I am in school these days. I was a good student and I still am. My score (marks) has rewarded me many times. I got money from school to buy books, copybooks as well as pencils to write. I think it is my ability that is keeping me in school for so long. I believe education gives me a light. It is a wealth. It is a means to ensure me employment in the future.

There were others who saw very positive things happening in schools, things related to caste and caste relations especially. For Tek the knowledge or information transmitted in schools is valuable to the political development of the village, for helping them to understand equality, inequality and oppression. For Ram the social context of caste relations is different in school than in the past, so all can go to school and sit together, learn together.

> Tek:- I found that to be schooled means to find ways to be liberated from caste restriction. School for me is such a place where our children know what is equality, and who oppressed whom and why. When our children come home from school they bring interesting stories to share with us. We can draw similar inferences from our experience of oppression and tell our history of oppression to our children. So schooling has become a good source of knowledge directly to our children and indirectly to ourselves. (Date: 17-2-2052 VS or 31 May 1995)
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> Ram:- I did not get a chance to study, it was not that easy to go to school during my days. Actually we did not have a school in our village. Only Brahmans used to go to a Guru's house to study. but because of the concept of non-touchability we (Kami) were not allowed to sit with Brahmans at that time. So I did not go to study with a Guru. Now the situation is different and everyone can go to school, sit together, and learn together. There is no social restriction in the classroom. Our children can discuss with the Brahmans or whoever is there. It is very much easier to go to school these days than the days of ours and so I decided to send my children to school. (Date of discussion:- 17-2-2052 VS or 31 May 1995)

Again, it is not quite clear why these parents see the school experience of their children so differently than the earlier parents. It is obvious that they focus on something different, on caste and political relationships rather than economic ones, and perhaps then one sees schooling differently. But others, even if they agree that some of the positive things mentioned above are happening in schools want more and in their description of that 'more'

they indirectly tell us what schools are 'like' to them. For example, Madhu and Kali would like to study as adults:

> Madhu:- I feel hesitant to go to school because of my age. How can I study with a ten year child in school? It is very difficult for me. It would be a good idea for someone to teach us privately in our village and then we could go to school for higher grades, may be 8 or 9, but no one is there to help us that way, not even the school teachers. Who will help us, the low caste people! (Date of discussion:- (19-2-2052 VS or 2 June 1995)
>
> Kali:- I want to study in adult literacy class when I can afford the time but when that will be I don't know. My husband is in India. I would like to write him a letter, my private experiences while he is not at home, but I can not do it because I am illiterate. May be one day, I'll be able to do that but not now. So I have decided to send my daughter who is just three year old now to school . Maybe next year I'll send her to school and ask her to write her father about me when she will be able enough to do that. (Date of discussion:- 17-2-2052 VS or 31 May 1995)

Schooling is a place where people learn, where one learns to read and write, but schools and especially the classes where those things are taught to children. It is not comfortable to be an adult learning with little children, although perhaps the child can take on the family functions that require schooling. These startements are less clearly criticisms of school, and more an image of what school is in the village and a wish for there to be something different, something which would enable the older Dalit woman to learn the knowledge and skills which schooling teaches.

There is another image which can be read from criticims of school, from an expectation or wish that schooling do something the speakers do not believe it does now. Teachers need to be active in the community, to tell *Dalits* about what actually goes on in school, what it costs to attend. And schools and teachers should contribute to the social movement in the village which will eliminate caste culture.

> Devi:- You know what? Many of our people do not know that government does not take tuition fees when children go to school. In this situation, we expect the dynamic role of a teacher to make our community aware of all these educational facilities which are given by the government. (Date of discussion:- 1-3-2052 VS or 15 June 1995).
>
> Shashi:- School has become an instrument to eliminate the caste culture to some extent. But we are expecting more from school. We expect that schools can lead a movement in each village. In the movement, the school teachers can make villagers aware of the origin of caste culture, and tell people that it should be abolished in order to make all people equal no matter which caste they belong to. (Date of discussion:- 7-3-2052 VS or 21 June 1995)

Thus, the *Dalits* in Bungkot are living with the "hope" that one day the age old caste system will be relaxed, if not gone, along with the increased number of schooled *Dalits*. But to

arrive at that hope they need the school to be an intermediary between the orthodox high caste people and an initiator of change. *Dalit* elites as well as "sensitive elites" must work together to dismantle the caste culture by advancing a humanitarian culture for all.

Schooling in this study and to these Dalits equates with formal learning and learning according to Revan (1984 cited in Zuber-Skerritt, 1991: XIII) is a programmed knowledge plus questioning insight. The programmed knowledge laid a foundation for *Dalits* to get access to age old restricted knowledge through teaching them to read. Those who were unschooled, found themselves in the word of Mohan, a "*Kano Goru*" (blind ox). The access to written culture in general and to restricted knowledge in particular, has for the first time in their ancestral history given *Dalits* a questioning insight. In a discussion with a Damai and a Sarki group of the *Dalit* community Mohan, a Damai, said that once they were a hated people, a *Galliko Kukur* (stray dog). Now he could make claims for his developmental share since he was literate and hence he knew that his community, in his words, had got only a *Rasayan* (a leakage, or small leftovers) of development to improve their status. The questioning insight a schooled *Dalit* develops and a changed status, from *Kano Goru* or blind ox to *Dekhne Goru*, an ox who can see things going on around him or her, in Mohan's words, has underlined the paramount importance of schooling in *Dalit* lives.

> Binaya: I got a sense of how schooling is important in a *Dalit's* life. I know that sir is not a title of a high caste person like you but it is a title for all men if they are schooled. I also know that a money lender is not a person but it is a wealth of a person. You know I would be a sir like you if I were educated, and Nita, my daughter in law would be madam or miss if she had education. In that sense, I will tell you no one would think of caste of a schooled person. (Date of discussion:- 17-2-2052 VS or 31 May 1995).

School and Social Awareness, Social Activism for Change

As is indicated in the previous sections schooling in the minds of the *Dalits* is associated with change in many areas of their lives. They see it as a major element of change in caste relationships, in change in employment or employability, and a force for change in social class relationships. But it is also associated with 'liberation', that is it is seen as an institution which raises awareness or the consciousness of people and enables them to mobilize for change.

> Goma:- Schooling for me is an energy to question. Now I can ask you and people like you why are you treating us as a *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune* caste? What did we do a harm to you? Is this your religion to hate us? Is this always true that one has to follow the ancestral religious practice without knowing what it is? (Date: 24-2-2052 VS or 7 June 1995)
>
> Priti:- To me schooling made us able to question you high caste community people. Now we can tell with you that we are Nepali, we share a common

religion which is Hinduism, and we live in the same world that you live in. Moreover, we know that we have to send our children in school in order to make them able to understand why we were not given chance to study in the past. (Discussion Date:- 12-3-2052 or 26 June 1995)

Tek:- Schooled people generally ask questions, analyze the answers and follow the right track. In doing so, there seems to be a denial of social laws, but actually it is not so, but I agree that schooled persons are not as conservative as the illiterates.

There was a time when the high caste person used to scoff at us us and we were silent. But a schooled *Dalit* person does not think our past way. He starts to argue with the high caste people. Thus, I think these schooled *Dalits* have developed power to express themselves if they think they are in oppression. Sometimes we say to these schooled persons of our caste why do you talk with the high caste people that way? They, in response, tell us that it is not that *Jamana* (that time) to be quiet but the *Jamana* to question what we did wrong to high caste people. I believe that schooling gave our caste people an ability to be bold. (Discussion Date:- 17-2-2052 or 31 May 1995)

Bungkote *Dalit*, in the word of Paulo Freire (1968) lived in a "limit situation." By limit situation, Freire meant the inadequate use of a person's potentiality. The subjective limit situations are beliefs, ideology and stigmas attached to an individual's occupation. The objective limit situations, on the other hand, are the lack of access to education, to means of production, and a life lived in abject poverty. In a hope of getting out of this "limit situation" Bungkote *Dalit* joined in school where, in the words of Paule Freire, they had access only to banked information, information which teachers 'poured' into students, not helping them to think critcally about it or their situation. Yet in their lives these *Dalit* people were finding something of value in this 'banked information', something which helped them to challenge their situation. This I call the first process of liberation

In the second process of liberation, the Bungkote schooled *Dalits* began to organize themselves locally. Not only were schooled people asking questions against non-touchability and challenging its continuation as Goma, Priti, and Tek say, but I found the Bungkote *Dalit* community organizing themselves for social emancipation, and mobilizing their community people to participate in anti non-touchability movements. The schooled *Dalits* had organizations, most of them influenced by the political ideology of both leftist (Marxist) and rightist (Congress) parties. But these organizations were raising *Dalits'* voices against age-old domination and non-touchability. They were also demanding equality as well as liberty.

Kedar:- See, an unschooled person is relatively conservative. They do nothing with their conscience, but the schooled person knows the way to be adjusted in this society. So we have an organization. It is a *Dalit's* organization. There are well-known and respected *Dalits* in this

organization. They are leading both the society of the *Dalits* and the high caste people.

And yet they are confined to their party politics. We have a complaint against them that they are not always faithful to us and are not enforcing their party heads to persuade then of our rights to live as a human being. Again they have developed pride in themselves that they are the only person, big person to help Dalits. In this situation, we need a number of schooled Dalits to make them realize that they are only the fore runners for the cause of the Dalits, that there are many who can change the society. (Discussion date:- 19-2-2052 or 2 June 1995)

They boycotted century old social roles entrusted to them on the eve of *Dashain* (a great festival) and challenged the high caste values by worshipping the Goddess Kali, which had been forbidden to them.

Puru:- Yes, we are organizing *Dalits*. We called meeting of the *Dalits*, raised our concerns, and discussed there. We also decided to raise a certain amount of money for our organizational work.... In different meetings, we decided to enter into the Hindu temple. Here again we found two types of persons, those who voted for our proposal and those who were reluctant to follow our proposal. Anyway we entered into the Hindu temple, we did not play musical instruments there and we did not accept the *Bilo*, a tail of a goat which is often a share to a Damai.

Every body was prepared that time, but this effort could not last that long. Now this plan is no more effective because of the disputes between *Dalits*. (For example in the above conflict) the Kami did not refuse to take the *Bilo*, the neck of a goat and the Sarki to take the *Bilo* for their caste, the skin of the goat that is sacrificed in the temple of the Goddess Kali. (Discussion date:- 5-3-2052 or 19 June 1995)

Kabi:- These schooled *Dalits* are convincing our community people to go to school. They have donated money for welfare activities in the village. Thus, I compare a schooled person with an eye that sees everything and the unschooled person with blind eyes that can't see anything.

As the number of a schooled *Dalits* grew they began to organize and show their power. As a result of it, a *Dalit* can enter into a temple and worship God. The multi-party political system helped a lot for this kind of awakening among *Dalits*. (Discussion Date:- 18-2-2052 or 1 June 1995).

Movements such as these did not only happen after people had been schoooled; they were created by students in school who would return to their home village to mobilize against untouchability.

Shekhar:- My experience of castism in the village made me rebellious against the caste culture. So I discussed this with all of the *Dalits* in school, and began a movement against untouchability. We came to our village and began to organize our people against untouchability. As a result of our movement, our people decided not to work in *Bali*, not to go in *Bista's* home, and not to eat outside on the verandah or in the yard of their homes.

I do not think that it is only we who tried to overthrow the caste culture. A generation ago, there were some literate *Dalits* in Wayak, Bhyakure,

> Taklung, Bungkot, Makaisingh, and Gorkha Bazaar who decided that they will not work in *Bali* any more, and they will not eat the cooked food in the house of these so called high caste people. I do not know who was the leader of this movement but I do know that they were some of the literate people. This movement made people aware but it could not continue because of our economic hardship. (Discussion date:- 5-3-2052 or 19 June 1995)

Bungkote *Dalits*, thus, had used the 'banked information' as a reservoir of knowledge and energy to question against social taboos, to organize both the schooled as well as non-schooled *Dalits* to fight against what Anthony Gidden calls repressive institutions. such as political, economic, symbolic, and legal/repressive institutions, and to launch a social movement locally against non-touchability.

There were three types of organized activites engaged in by schooled *Dalit*s, organizing activities to increase the accessibility of school, organizing activities as students returning home to work against untouchability, and organized activities to challenge the place of *Dalits* in the Hindu temple. I would argue these represent moves to liberation, though Freire (1968) denies the role of banked information for liberation and Chitrakar (1995) hesitated to accept that Nepali pedagogical process could be called liberative. Perhaps the difference in this case is that the 'banked' information in Nepali schools does not support the caste system.

But also to be fair to both Freire and Chitrakar, it cannot be said for sure that it was either pedagogy or school knowledge itself that made this kind of mobilizing possible. It may be that something else in school and its place in the community, something which led to people feeling very confident when they completed schooling, was behind these liberative movements. But it does seem that 'the banked information' of the school curriculum was less able to stop these kinds of actions than the 'banked information' of the traditional caste system transmitted from generation to generation.

Somehow the information acquired in school by the schooled Bungkote *Dalits*, turned out to be a source of power for the *Dalit* community, a knowledge power to develop questioning insights organizing capabilities against age old caste oppression, and participation in the anti-nontouchability movement. Naturally, the liberal political atmosphere in the country facilitated this process so people who are not well schooled participated in it. For example, Puru says:

> I am not a well schooled person, yet I want to know why Radio Nepal does not announce that no one has to practice untouchability and touchability any more. Why a *Gorakhapatra* (national news paper) does not write this way? Why are they silent? It is already 32 years that our constitution wrote, no one can differentiate people by calling them touchable and untouchable. I

do not know who is ignoring this constitutional arrangement against untouchability?, who is disturbing Radio Nepal and *Gorakhapatra*?
Discussion Date:- 2-3-2052 or 16 June 1995.

And others see ways to facilitate change and provide service to villagers even if they do not choose to form an organization, to mobilise others to participate with them:

> Goma:- Once schooled, I could understand my situation and the situation of my village people. I know their problem and also know the thing that I have to do with my life. My eyes are open now. I can see the discrimination in this society and also know the solution. I have courage and spirit to initiate programs that help the *Dalit* community understand the nature of sufferings and I know ways to persuade high caste people to help the *Dalit* community. As you know I would not know my situation and the situation of my people if I was not schooled.
>
> Besides, my study has made me able to help my people. You know some of the people from my community, mostly males, have gone to India. They send letters to their family. But their family members are illiterate. So they come to me to read the letter for them and to write a letter in response. At least, I am using my literacy skills to help my people this way.

Schooling and Transition of Culture: Class, Culture, Gender

In Bungkot schooling was clearly linked to social change. "Social values are changing rapidly since schools are opened in Bungkot" reported an old Kshatriya man who fought in the second great world war. Such change of values was described above in relation to caste relations, and the search for employment outside the village. It was also suggested that some of the problems *Dalits* spoke of their children having in school, and in sending their children to school, sounded more like problems of social class than caste. Dalits were happy with the jobs they could get, for they meant more money and a better living than their life in the village, but if viewed from a class position they were mostly lower class jobs and the amount of schooling their children got was often just 'enough' to get these kinds of jobs.

There are also new divisions in the *Dalit* communities. Since the predominant values of the schooled people were individualism and competitiveness, the *Dalits* were also substituting traditional values such as cooperation and collaboration with these values. They were aware of the introduction of what they called the 'coca-cola culture' and the individualistic approach by schooled persons in their poverty stricken but well-knit cooperative community.

> Puru:- There are some schooled *Dalits*. They are selfish. They do not want to improve the status of the community, instead they want to be a *Thulo Manchhe* (great person) in the eyes of the high caste people. So they forget the community and think of their own good. The next thing I already told you we *Dalits* are divided into different political and social groups. We have no unity. For example Kami and Sarki think that they are higher caste

> people than a Damai, a Gaine, and a Churaute. (Discussion date:- 5-3-2052 or 19 June 1995)
>
> Shiva:- The schooled person prefer to talk and work and be with the schooled people because they do not have to face the problem of non-touchability there. Anyway, they are organized under different political and social organizations that help us come out of this social oppression. As I noticed, the schooled person left home for money, prestige, and easy life. I am sure they are getting it. Schooling is to be credited for this happening in our community. (Discussion date:- 8-2-2052 VS or 22 May 1995)

Puru and Shiva see different aspects of this 'new class' structure. The one focuses on individuals wanting to be 'great persons' but expresses it in terms of respect from high caste people, the other sees schooled persons almost forming their own caste, a caste in which old caste boundaries no longer matter. Yet in both cases the schooled people would seem to separate themselves from their old caste membership, and in neither case does the Bungkote *Dalit* use the language of 'social class' to describe these changes. Caste remains the most important social category in their lives despite the presence of 'leftist' political parties in the village, and it is the social category they want to change.

Puru's observation on the schooled people of his caste echoes the critical theorist's perspective in which they talk about the replication of the superstructure in the oppressed community. As a result of this replication some of the schooled *Dalits* become alienated from their community people and try to assimilate with the larger society which means pleasing and being respected by higher castes. Instead of being able to transform their own community, these *Dalits* eventually may create another level of oppressor, an oppressor of their own community. As Kedar says above when he speaks of political organizing:

> And yet they are confined to their party politics. We have a complaint against them that they are not always faithful to us and are not enforcing their party heads to persuade them of our rights to live as a human beings. Again they have developed pride in themselves that they are the only person, big person to help Dalits. In this situation, we need a number of schooled Dalits to make them realize that they are only the fore runners for the cause of the Dalits, that there are many who can change the society. (Discussion date:- 19-2-2052 or 2 June 1995)

Schooling, though it ensured social awareness in the Bungkote *Dalit* community, also promoted social selectivity through its contents, rules, regulation, and conventional pedagogical system (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979). In Malinowski's phrase "tribal bankers" (the contemporary elites) preserved this culture in the texts, the non-literate community such as *Dalit's* received that tradition unquestioningly, and the teacher as an economic as well as symbolic capital became able to persuade *Dalits* to be loyal to them (Bourdieu, 1990). But this 'banking' was more closely aligned with social class than caste; for caste relations it contributed to change, even as it created and contributed to new class structures.

Thus, the schools in Bungkot could reproduce inequalities among the members of the *Dalit* community as in Ghana (Weis, 1981), Jordan (Qawasmah, 1986), Kenya (Nkyinyangi, 1982), India (Kumar-D, 1976), the Philippines (Foley, 1976), and Zambia (Scudder & Colson, 1980). It could bring many middle income *Dalits* and a few low income *Dalits* to school. These fortunate *Dalits*, who got a chance to be schooled, emerged as *Dalit* Brahman in their own community and to some degree these *Dalit* Brahmans evolved as a caste within their own caste.

But one cannot argue that this caste, or most people in this caste, equate with what Berman (1979) and Bray (1984) call "safe" people for the Nepali mainstream culture despite Kedar's critical comments above. Most of these *Dalit* Brahman were found involved in people's awakening programs through their political speechs, literacy programs, social awakening activities, and community movements. Thus, they were trying to challenge conventional socio-religious values, traditions, hierarchical discipline including rules over who could speak, and the practice of non-touchability.

At the same time, the mainstream culture has begun to develop a culture which respects quality rather than caste because of the constant flow of *Dalits* to the 'new world'. Only this notion of 'quality' is bound up with success in school, and with a slowly developing social class system in Bungkot and Nepal. Thus the schooled *Dalits* learnt a school culture which respected white collar occupations and looked down on menial occupations including their own traditional ones. Their traditional occupations were also looked down on in the caste system, but schooling seemed to do nothing to change this attitude. More troubling is what seems to be other elements of the 'new class system', taken partly from Hinduism and partly from elsewhere. In the village it seems that now jobs which are respected are those in which one can keep clean, not get dirty clothes or hands, and those which involve mental activity rather than physical activity, and jobs which pay good money. In the past and to some degree still in the present the primary form of subsistence for *Dalits* and other castes was not their caste occupation but their agricultural activity, and there was no 'caste' associated with working the land for all worked the land. But this 'new class' thinking means that agricultural work may one day be as disvalued as were the jobs of the *Dalit* castes.

What of the relationship between schooling and culture, especially culture understood as attitudes and language and traditional rituals? Since *Dalit* were the followers of the dominant Hindu culture and spoke the Nepali language, there was little liklihood of them thinking of school as a form of cultural oppression or acculturation to some other culture. For them, the oppression was caste oppression within their own culture and their move for

change required not freedom from that culture but a transformation of it. In this situation, this study could not see any connection of Bungkote *Dalits* perceptions with those found in Ogbu's (1978) or Gibson and Ogbu's (1991) study of Black American or Forcese's (1990) study of Canadian Indians; nor with Bacchus's (1980), Ilich's (1971), Carnoy and Werthen's (1979), and Yeakey's (1981) studies in nations of the South. But for other castes these researchers were very right, for example Magar community youths of Bungkot VDC had forgotten cultural dances and their mother language right after their schooling. So did the Gurungs of Kaski in Nepal (Ragsdale, 1989).

> Pushan:- We Magar have our own language and some cultural dances such as *Pangdure, Sorathi and Ghatu*. But the schooled people of our community neither like to speak our language nor do they prefer to dance our traditional dances. Now, they are attracted to the songs from radio and cinema. Thus our language and our cultural dances are approaching death.

> There is a growing trend that there should be no more *Chhoichhito* once we touch with Damai, Kami. It is good but I feel bad because our language is gone for ever. I do not speak Magar with my sons and grandsons. I have to speak in Nepali. I think we need Nepali to survive in Nepal and English to get employment in the British and Indian Army (but I would like to speak Magar too).

Not only did the Bungkote Magar find cultural change among them because of schooling in their community but the Gurungs of Kaski, Nepal experienced similar changes in their community. According to Ragsdale (1989: 111), the cultural dance club *Rodighar* which specialized in preparing Gurung youth to deal with the opposite sex, ended almost simultaneously with the introduction of primary school in the village. The high caste schooled Brahman on the other hand, began to eat chicken, pork, egg, and buffalo and yet they were not discarded culturally which was the tradition long ago.

> Kabi:- In my days, a Brahman never ate pork, chicken, water buffalo, and never drank alcohol. As the number of English schooled Brahmans grew in the village, they began to eat these things and gave the explanation that it is okay to eat them all because they drink milk and why not then eat the meat of a water buffalo? I was thinking that they, who violated caste culture would be degraded and pushed to be a low caste person forever. But no one does that these days. I believe this is a change caused by schooling. (Discussion date:- 18-2-2052 VS or 1 June 1995)

But, if one looks into the difference between the home culture of the Bungkote *Dalits* and tries to compare it with the school culture, they will see numerous incompatibilities as Puru has said above (supra, p. 101). By picking up these differences, one could see that school does not fit with the *Dalits* culture, and as Bourdieu and Passeron argue it does not convert *Dalit* knowledge to 'cultural capital' for schools and later in life. Perhaps if teachers and

schools had a better understanding of these cultural differences they could teach differently and develop a different curriculum which would make it easier for *Dalit* children to learn and be happy in school, but the *Dalits* themselves would not say they want to keep their language or their behaviour in these ways. Even as they ask other castes to change through schooling, they do not object to changing themselves through schooling.

Gender relations too have been chang`ing and in the village there has been a growing trend of villagers sending girls to school. In the past, Bungkote *Dalits*, like mainstream society, had a tradition to give less importance to girls' education. But with the rapid expansion of schools in Bungkot VDC, parents were encouraged to send their girls to school in the hope for better conjugal life and the development of self confidence in them. This then was again a cultural change related to the expansion of schooling though there are still few girls in schools because the parents maintain some prejudices, have economic constraints, continue to lived with conservative social values, and want their children to do domestic chores for them (Unesco, 1971; Shrestha, 1983; CERID, 1984; IIDS, 1990).

> Tek:- The next thing I realize is that there is a trend to send girls in school. Because of the growing number of schooled Kami, the Kami girls are now in school so that in future they will have a schooled man to marry.
>
> Schooled persons have increased their level of income. They now have started to send their boys and girls to boarding school. (Discussion date:- 24-2-2052 VS or 7 June 1995)

Thus in all these areas, caste and social class, local culture, and gender relations, schooling is associated with change and what some call moderniztation.

Summary

Caste, according to Dumont (1980), is a non-cyclic, linear expression of hierarchical society of the East which contradicts the principles of the egalitarian West. In this caste society, *Dalit* belongs to the lowest stratum which never had access to school. It was the western type of school which gave them schooling access for the first time in the history of Nepal. This school is heavily criticized for its limitations, curricular arrangements, pedagogical process, and outputs but the *Dalits* of Bungkot VDC experienced something different. For them, according to their discussion with me, they experienced physical mobility, developed self confidence, minimized inferiority feeling because they were 'non-touchable', developed questioning insights, identified avenues for employment, promoted helpful attitudes towards women, were ensured community respect, realized the importance of schooling in life, Sanskritized their behavior, increased their level of income, raised their quality of life, and become optimistic for a bright future along with their schooling. Despite these positive experiences from schooling, the Bungkote *Dalits* introduced a coca-cola

culture to their poor economy; and competitiveness as well as individualism to their collaborative and cooperative culture.

It is thus clear that schooling plays a pivotal role in the lives of the *Dalits* of Bungkot, but that in areas of change and development it does not do this alone. The historic structure of caste is alive and well in the village, and Dalit families see the school continuing to contribute to that structure. They see it in the way their children are treated in the school, the inability of teachers to see the needs of their children and to recognize that particular support may be required for their children to do well in school. But they do not see caste more widely as an 'in school' phenomenon, and they do not relate it to school curriculum. On the contrary, for the most part they see school as ameliorating the caste situation, as contributing to changing it through the relatively egalitarian treatment of students, and as a source of hope for them to be able to change their situation.

In fact, all the students who are in senior school grades, that is those who are by definition doing well in school, observe that school is a good place for them to be. Whether speaking of caste or gender, they agree that pupils get scuffed and disciplined but that teacher's behaviour in this fashion is related to school performance, not to caste or gender. To them, schooling is 'meritocratic', if they can get good grades and do well in school they are treated well and school rewards them.

Yet, one is given pause. It would seem that much of their discussion of the *Dalit* children being treated poorly or not doing well in school is related to class rather than caste. It is their poverty, the children's inability to eat or dress well or their need to do household labour which gets them into trouble at school. But class is not discussed in this community, by teachers or parents and caste is somehow bound up with the teachers' behaviour, for the parents see this as behaviour towards their community of people, not just towards themselves. Only it seems to them that if their children manage somehow to acquire schooling and a job, then they will no longer treated like a *Dalit*.

They also place great hope in schooling as an avenue to paid employment, to a better and easier living for their children than they have had. The amount of schooling may be very small, but being able to read and write gives them access to jobs they could not have held, and gives them confidence that they can learn on the job. The notion of a 'vocational' role of schooling is not one in which schooling 'prepares' them for a specific job, but rather one in which schooling somehow changes their general skill and confidence, enabling them to seek employment and to learn on the job once they find it.

Cultural change in relation to schooling has a very particular meaning to them...it is a change in caste relationships so they will be respected and not be poor. There is no desire

expressed to hang onto some element of 'caste culture', a culture which has been profoundly oppressive to them. Rather the demand is that schooling do more and more to transform that culture, to make it into something different so they will no longer be a 'hated people'. No one mentions the possibility that schools may attack this relationship through school knowledge, but they do see it as something schools do now in the way they treat children, in the 'hidden curriculum' of the school.

This change in caste relations would seem to be happening fast, in work, in politics, in the media, but in every case it is not fast enough for the people who wish it to change, to disappear as an element of their lives. And even as change occurs it is not without its resistent spots...in family life, in social relationships, at places of celebration the caste culture remains vibrant and even those who treat the *Dalits* as equals in school often do not so treat them in these other contexts.

There is, from a Magar, concern about loss of culture, loss of the Magar language, even as he concurs that the caste culture must go. But with the group of *Dalits* in this study language is not an issue as they have for generations spoken Nepali. However, dialect is as their children suffer at school because their dialect of Nepali sounds vulgar, rude, to the higher castes. And there is from a farmer with considerable land holding concern that the loss of the castes, the desire for these Dalits to leave the village and seek paid labour, will make it difficult for him to make a living. He too may recognise the need for the caste situation to change, but as for the Magar these changes are not without pain and difficulty in the developing Bungkot community.

Is schooling contributing to change in the lives of these Dalits? It seems to be doing so at a profound and welcome pace. It changes by changing the way that people think about caste and by increasing their chance of getting paid labour outside the village and escaping the caste situation there. But it is by no means alone in making those changes. It interacts with a political context in which political parties decry caste, in which governmental legislation insists on caste equality, and in which the media becomes a part of the local culutral and knowledge scene, and an occupational situation in which many men have been to India or further afield with the army. And thus it contributes to 'activism' among Dalits, the creation of political movements to eliminate the structural constraints which face them, to insist the *Dalits* no longer be untouchable in Nepali society.

Chapter VII
Reflections and Implications

Inequality, class and caste

Plainly the caste system is an expression of social inequality in Nepal. But the reasons for its creation may not be the same as the western interpretation of inequality would suggest; at least it seems that understanding it only in terms of Marxist defintions of social class is not enough since marriage rules, dietary rules, inheritance rules, and caste occupational specialization seem not to be directly related to property ownership or labourers. However, if Nepal is thought of as a 'precapitalist' society, with all people owning land and relations of status, prestige, power, and economy being controlled and explained through a caste system, as Weberians in general and Giddens in particular would suggest, then western social theory does help to understand the caste system. And within that understanding one cannot deny the role of the state, and economic institutions to produce people such as *Dalits* nor that schooling has played and is playing a role in that production.

But these *Dalit* groups of people, because of their castes denial of access to traditional valued knowledge, religious or cosmogenic knowledge, got a chance to be schooled only with the introduction of western education. With this opportunity a number of factors made the *Dalits* perceive schooling as important and valuable to their community: people's exposure to India, encouragement from sensitive elites, presence of educational institutions near their community, political freedom, social openness, growing pressure of the written culture in both the work place and the residential area, and their desire to leave the hated and poorly paid manual work of their caste for non-manual jobs. Thus they were profoundly interested in schooling their children in a hope that schooling would be the means to change their poverty ridden, ignorant, immobile life in which they were held in contempt by other castes to a prosperous, literate, and dynamic life in which they would be treated with respect and as equals by women and men in other castes. At this point assessing their experience in school against a western literature that addresses how children of different cultures and social classes fare in school shows some shared points of experience and others not shared; on the one hand the children often do seem to have bad experiences in school such as the western literature on education and social class, cultural discontinuity and cultural oppression would suggest; on the other *Dalits* do not see themselves as having a separate culture and language to preserve but as being within a larger culture which oppresses them and must be changed, both through themselves changing and other caste groups changing.

Thus 'caste' is the most salient category for them in schooling and in their lives. Neither the concepts of social class nor gender are used to help them understand their situation, although there is a kind of primitive notion of social class when people speak of the rich and poor among them. But always it is caste which they turn to, even in explaining the behaviour of the rich and poor. Could caste then be the concept used in education and schooling for change, in efforts to support more 'libertive' changes for the Dalits of Bungkot and Nepal?

Caste, A Socio-cultural Ethos and Educational Change

The cosmogenic cycle, Joseph Campbell (1990) explains, is pure consciousness and mythology interprets this consciousness in connection with human experience. Each culture gives mythical interpretation to its understanding of the world, its origin, its development, and the mysterious process which brought it into being in the world. The idea of purity for the attainment of pure consciousness and impurity explaining one being in an 'unconscious' state was incorporated into the Nepali life style. Rituals were designed to attain pure consciousness and people were forced to follow their *Varnashram Dharma* (duty) according to the socially accepted level of their consciousness, pure, impure, on the way to pure consciousness, or on the way to unconsciousness.

The contact of Aryans with Dravidians and other ethnic groups such as those of Nepal, brought problem to this process of classifying people under the *Varnashram* system. New and easy approaches, such as using a person's or ethnic group's occupation, dietary habit or religious rituals, evolved to classify these people according to Aryan socio-religious norms. These newly developed approaches to classify people dominated the earlier approach. In both the processes of classification, people with more power than others, a power class, appeared. Persons having cosmogenic vision dominated others with their religious as well as intellectual capacity. Some warriors emerged as a class to institutionalize political supremacy, and some trade people evolved as a class to control the economy. In the name of caste requirements their power struggle and class struggle continued. In the process of struggle, some were enslaved, some remained unclassified, and others were socially boycotted, economically marginalized, and ritually excluded (Sanskrityan, 1986).

Each strata of people acquired social legitimacy associated with being in their class and learnt the religious and cultural explanation of why they were in a specific caste or 'class' of people. Religious rituals and cultural rules were tightly knit together to ensure social legitimacy for the activities of each caste of people. In Gerhard Lenski's words (from

Grabb, 1984), the potential coercive force of the dominant group and the "inertia" of custom, habit, or beliefs gave impetus to the explanation or social legitimation for people's being in one or the other class or caste. Pedagogues and intellectuals from the highest class/caste of each time period, secured hegemonic control by revitalizing these social codes in their writings. In due course of time, people were acculturated with their caste habit and hence conveyed it from generation to generation within their families. Furthermore, the oriental tradition of blending cosmogenic and physical philosophy into a social tradition (Campbell, 1990) continued this class tradition as a caste culture.

What should educated elites and educational systems do about this today? Since caste culture originated from a mythical expression of cosmogenic knowledge, Nepali society requires knowledge to reinterpret this mythical expression by separating its sociological and psychological functions. In doing so, the present society can understand the importance of mythology as what Campbell (1990) calls "a pouch to a Kangaroo's youngsters" and understand that mythology always caters to the contemporary needs of adult society. The current society requires different mythologies to reinterpret the earlier conceived caste system. Further, since oriental religious books such as *Manusmriti*, *Yagyabalkasmriti*, *Brihaspatismriti*, *Sukraniti*, and *Nirnayasindhu*, and religious leaders such as *Prashat* paved the way to the promotion of caste culture, the present religious leaders, learned people of the Sanskrit literature, and culturally sensitive elites need to reinterpret religious texts and reorient Nepali society to suit current egalitarian principles of society (Bhatta, 1994). There are many texts within Hindu literature which point to a different understanding of caste than the one which is central today and these texts need to be brought forward and discussed so that Hindu religious knowledge can be changed from within, as well as shaped by outside pressures.

Second it should be recognized that in some ways the caste system is a class system and it accumulated energy because of the power struggle between different classes of people. Hence a well established democratic culture to share power is essential to challenge the existing caste system in Nepal. Associated with this version of class is the hierarchical base of the social system in which each caste developed a superiority complex towards others below them while those at the bottom, the *Dalits*, cultivated inferiority feeling despite the potentiality of their caste specific trade to produce consumer goods and contribute to the economic development of their communities and Nepal. In this context, Nepali intellectuals need to question the importance of a hierarchical society by documenting its shortcomings and advancing the benefits of egalitarian society. These intellectuals should also work with others who are not intellectuals to develop social institutions for organic solidarity of all

caste peoples, and not just create a 'caste of intellectuals' who think they are superior to all others as members of the Brahmin caste have thought through the years.

The third thing that we need to do is also a task for intellectuals, for the high caste people are culturally kept in an illusion. Even an illiterate Brahman now thinks that he or she is pure because of his/her genes, bones, womb or whatever. But they either forget, ignore, or do not understand the fact that some intellectuals who were knowledgeable about the cosmogenic cycle made religious rites and suggested social rules against others who were illiterate *Dalits*. Not only did the state system enforce such rules against the *Dalit* community, but the contemporary intellectuals of the day provided arguments for the state enforced and culturally perpetuated rules and regulations. But these socio-religious rules were subject to change in the past and are changing in the present. In this context, the emerging number of schooled *Dalits* and the sensitive elites of the high caste community can work together on two fronts. On the one front, they can make these high caste people able to understand the dynamism involved in the origin and the continuation of the caste system. On the next front, these sensitive elites and the schooled *Dalits* can prepare the *Dalit* community for mass sanskritization.

Prior to undertaking this type of program, it is essential to prepare a group of researchers including persons from the *Dalit* community to do research on socio-religious texts that debarred *Dalits* for centuries from being equal to other caste people. Since many such texts are written in Sanskrit, it would be wise to mobilize the professors of the Sanskrit University to reinterpret such texts and make them contextual. These research findings need to be shared in educational, political, social, religious, and cultural institutions. Besides, sociological researchers need to launch intellectual awakening programs where people share their knowledge and researchers share their findings regularly.

The fourth activity which would be part of changing this caste culture would be working with the Dalit communities to help them change old habits which have evolved with their caste position. If the larger social context no longer supports beliefs which make *Dalits* untouchable, if other caste groups no longer treat them with contempt and as hated people, and if they can get enough schooling to get or create good jobs in the economy, they will no longer need to live as squatters, earn very little, and eat unhealthy food. Their traditional life style and eating habit require *sanskritization* in order to be "equal" with the high caste community (Srinivas, 1977). That is, once it is recognized that their behaviour is not the "reason" they are untouchable, their behaviour which contributes to them not living their full potential as human beings can be addressed. In this context, *Dalit* organizations, and sensitive elites need to reach out to the *Dalit* community with messages for

sanskritization, a program to change their food and liquor consumption habits and language use and any other behaviour which contributes to their own oppression.

Finally, if not cosmogenic beliefs and historical relations of power but function, only function, is responsible for the origin of caste system as conceived by Nesfield (Baral, 1993), Nepali society needs a strong national trade union with its petty unions through out the country. Within unions *Dalit* castes could think of their work as a trade, an occupation in which they are the experts of the country, not part of a caste position. They can use the power of the union to negotiate with government and employers to be sure they are treated fairly and that their work is respected. As the unions would develop as an expert pool of skilled workers, the pool administrators should put effort towards the creation of an expertise accepting society in which different types of expertise are seen as equal rather than a caste accepting society in which some types of expertise are associated with people being considered inferior.

"English" Schooling and Change for Dalits, A Shift to Written Culture

Traditionally, either the high caste people especially Brahmans generated, controlled, and distributed knowledge in Nepal or all knowledgeable persons were called Brahmans and they became ritually powerful and used their knowledge to maintain that power. They then promoted both an ideological and sociological context, decided the nature of knowledge, and set the social rules which legitimized their position. Thus, traditionally schooling was a perogative of high caste people in Nepal (Bista, 1995, 1992; Caplan, 1975) and *Dalits* were never exposed to a written culture in the traditional schooling system. The introduction of western type schooling was the beginning point for *Dalits* to gain entry into the written world.

An open politico-social environment, and the presence of school as an institution at their door encouraged *Dalits* to go to school. Some fortunate Bungkote *Dalits* got an early taste of schooling by the 1960's. They, as an English poet wrote "as one light lights another nor grows less" encouraged and supported schooling in their families and kin. These schooled *Dalits* became role models to other members of the community. Thus the schooled *Dalits* influenced others in their communities to school children. Apart from that, the *Dalit* community felt the pressure of a written culture around their village: a shopkeeper hung a signboard on his wall, a bottle of drugs had written directions telling how to use the medicine, a political party member distributed a pamphlet or its manifesto to read, a ticket booking counter gave a ticket which showed the bus number and its schedule.

While all this was happening at the village level, the government extended schooling facilities into each and every village development committee in the hope of transforming traditional peasants into modern men and women. And the school by the nature of the institution put pressure for more schooling in the *Dalit* community: a primary school graduate wanted to go to lower secondary school, a lower secondary school raised its status and became a secondary school, a parent wanted his or her children to study more, a school teacher wanted more students in his or her class no matter the caste to which they belonged. Finally, local politicians encouraged *Dalits* to be schooled in a hope that the party would win *Dalit* votes. As a response to all these pressures, more and more *Dalits* go to school and some of them go further and further in the school system.

These forces that helped expand schooling in the *Dalit* community are always active and are nurtured by the growing addiction of *Dalits* to schooling. It may sound like "false consciousness" but this study showed that an illiterate wanted his or her children to enter school, a simply literate *Dalit* wanted his or her children to do high school graduation, high school graduate *Dalits* expected their children to go for higher education. Again, the schooled *Dalit* knew what Dore (1976) calls qualification escalation and Collins (1971) calls certification linked to status changes and hence wanted their children to get more education in the generations to come. But this entry to school and more and more schooling gave *Dalits* the ability to read literature that debarred them from schooling and enough insight to question why they were debarred for centuries.

In this context many of the criticisms of schooling in developing countries and contexts seem to miss the mark. To criticize school for being an imitation of the British pattern, for alienating people from their lived culture, for not promoting an egalitarian personality in a hierarchical society, for not incorporating practical life related contents into the curriculm, for not promoting independent thoughts in students, for not producing 'culturally appropriate" elites, for not being clear on whether school is a cultural outpost or a state outpost, and so on, may not be sufficient. Here my point is that first we should let *Dalit's* oral tradition be retraced as textbook knowledge, let the *Dalit* community develop cultural tension, let their "proposed world" be their "work culture" (Keyes, 1991), let what Max Weber calls the "ideal of cultivation" be disrupted by western education, let them become "modern men and women" as predicted by modernization theory, let them go beyond being a makeshift mirgrant to a permanent migrant into written culture, let them value "success" and challenge caste culture, and let them shift away from their parental occupation through both the formal and nonformal learning process. In doing so, *Dalits* will develop a non-traditional psyche as did the Gwembe society in Zambia (Scudder & Colson, 1980); come

out of the caste culture by introducing individualism and competitiveness as Dumont (1980) predicted, transfer their cognitive achievement to contribute to community progress as did the Ponam adults in Papua New Guinea (Carrier, 1984), and try to escape from poverty (even though this sounds like naive optimism) and other problems as African Americans wanted to do in the United States (Ogbu, 1994,1986, Weis, 1986). At the same time, *Dalit* themselves can come to read the literature that debarred them for centuries from being equal with other caste people and they themselves can find out ways to come out of the oppression of the caste system.

It may be that schooling is changing their situation only from a caste system to a class system in which they will hold mostly lower class positions, but at present that change looks like a better life to the *Dalits*, and in many respects is a better life. When they begin to live in that system and see its short-comings, they will work to change it also and they will be better able to do that if they can read and write.

Following Marxists such as Gramsci's, Althussar's, and Poulantzas theoretical frame, by translating the correspondence theory of Bowles and Gintis to Nepal, by comparing national census data of dominant groups and ethnic minority groups, and by gathering empirical data about the effects of schooling among some ethnic minorities of the nations of South one can identify quite different findings or conclusions than I have come to in this study. But understanding the situation in Bungkot made me realize that *Dalits*, especially the Damai, Kami, and Sarki are different from ethnic minorities in many respects. They do not have a separate language, nor do they have a specific culture to be preserved. Moreover, they are ritually suppressed, economically kept dependent, politically undermined, and culturally made *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune* person. For them, a school at this moment is thought to be the only institution that can make them, in their words a "*Dekhne Goru* from a *Kanu Goru*." Once *Dalits* step into the written world, they themselves emerge as a potential force to criticize the school system and they then claim what a neo-literate claimed in Tanzania[1] (Unesco, 1980 cited in Molyneux, & Mackenzie, 1987) that they have developed self confidence.

At the same time as this reality is recognized some things do need to be done to address the many problems raised in the literature mentioned above. These include a change in national curricula, a shift from pedantic pedagogical process to what Mead (1982) calls lateral

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[1] Ndugu Yusufu Selemani (38), a farmer claimed "As a result of literacy I now understand the ways and wherefores of things and because I understand I can now maintain my own self respect.

transmission of knowledge or what Freire (1982) calls dialogical process, an immediate change in caste culture, and a reorientation of the newly established democratic state apparatus, but all of these are always a time consuming process. Many *Dalits* need to and will join schools during the process of these changes. So, a two pronged approach to schooling needs to be thought out. In one approach, *Dalits* need mandatory schooling where they should be encouraged to share their experience of being a *Dalit* among the high caste people no matter what it costs to their future; in the next approach, collaborative research with *Dalit* community people should be undertaken in order to understand the changes they desired in the school system. The nearby college, local schools, and the agencies or individuals working with or for the *Dalit* community can undertake such research in collaboration with *Dalits*.

Issues in Dalit Education: Building better schooling

All of the above discussion relates to building better schooling, for it speaks to the whole relationship of the *Dalits* to the society and schools. But during this research there was also much discussion about what needs to change within the schools, what kinds of problems exist there. Once Bungkote *Dalits* introduced schooling into their community, in the words of Max Weber, their "ideal of cultivation" (Williamson, 1990) changed. In this process of change, *Dalits* were anxious to send all their community children to school, retain them in school, make them a "success" in school, and expected them to improve their life style after school no matter whether schooling was a formal or nonformal learning structure. Their anxiousness in this respect resulted in them raising many issues such as how to re-schedule school hours to make them "fit" with *Dalit* children's time; how to prepare teachers to teach over age children in the standard classroom; how to establish and institutionalize a support system to help *Dalit* students, the need for collaboration with high caste sensitive elites, the need for sensitive students to monitor the progress of *Dalit* children; and how to develop communication links between *Dalit* parents and school teachers.

In order to resolve these issues, one needs multifaceted systematic interventions, however, to begin with it is necessary to start shorter school hours in the agricultural or *Nimek* seasons and longer school hour in slack seasons. The alternative approach to such schools would be nonformal classes for *Dalits* such as *Chelibeti* (after school) programs which have been used for the school age girl child in Nepal. In these re-scheduled programs *Dalit* children would get an opportunity for more interaction with each other and teachers and be able to learn faster.

But the critical point which underlies this idea is that schools need to take into account the economic cycle and economic situation of *Dalit* families. Schools need to find ways to enable Dalit children to come to school and not be hungry, to do schooling and not be shorter of food and other economic resources than they would be if they were not in school. Changing school times according to the annual and daily economic cycle is one way to do this, but only one way. If this does not adequately solve this problem other ways would need to be sought.

One other way is to improve the financial support system directly. Although a few Dalit families have members working away from home who send them money, and a few have good jobs in the village, most people in the Bungkote *Dalit* community are desperately poor and need additional support to bear both the direct and the indirect cost in education. For example school teachers could raise a revolving fund by collecting money from *Bhailo* and *Deushi* (a cultural approach to collect money for institutions in Nepal), or the Village Development Committee which gets 500,000 grants from government each year can establish a *Dalit* support trust. Once started, high caste sensitive elites, schooled *Dalits*, teachers and other *Dalits* who have good incomes, and Village Development Committee members need to continue their support to the *Dalit* support trust.

There is also an issue of teacher preparation to teach over age and under age children in the same classroom and to teach multi-graded classrooms. All teachers at all levels require such training, and this would need a school based teacher training program in Bungkot so that the real difficulties of the Bungkot community could be addressed during teacher training. The teachers during this training program should do collaborative and participatory research with the *Dalit* community to identify school related problems and how to solve them and do action research with *Dalit* children in school in collaboration with professors of Gorkha Education Campus. Here the point is to help teachers in the school and new teachers to be hired to think about the reasons why so many *Dalit* children are having difficulties in school and find solutions which they can implement. The idea would also contribute to developing a school culture which includes the notion that if children are not learning teachers need to do something to help them learn, not point their fingers at the parents and communities.

This approach to teacher education would address another issue which is the lack of meaningful communication links between *Dalit* parents and school teachers. Participatory and collaborative research would enable teachers to understand the *Dalit* community and help the *Dalit* community to understand teachers. Similarly, schooled *Dalits* need not only to get jobs as teachers so they can 'open' communication as colleagues but if they are not

teachers to open monthly discussion sessions with the school teachers. All of this must be done in a way that real communication is facilitated among the different groups, so that the situation between schools and the *Dalit* community comes to resemble what schooled *Dalits* now say happens to them in schools...inter-caste friendships form so they no longer feel 'treated like *Dalits*'.

There is an issue of *Dalit* children's attendence and success at school which requires a built-in system to monitor the progress of *Dalit* children in school. For that to happen the school administration needs to be reoriented so they will mobilize school teachers, energetic *Dalit* students, high caste sensitive elites, and other students. These persons would discuss what kind of program they could establish to monitor *Dalit* children's progress and institutionalize this approach so that the situation of every *Dalit* student in school would be well known and understood. They and the student would know the progress they are making, the difficulties they face, and support they require. Along with the school-based teacher education program this would be a way of changing school culture to take responsibility with the students for the learning they need to do rather than point fingers away from the school.

But there are other issues which are not so easily addressed, for they require not that teachers be helped to understand the situation but that the educational system challenge teachers to do their jobs. Bungkote *Dalits* were furious not with the subjects their children were being taught, not with the pedagogy the teachers were using, and not with the selection process the school was administering as many critical theorists claim, but with the negligence of teachers to their duty in school. They had little to say about curricular contents and pedagogical process but instead had perhaps too many hopes from their minimum level of schooling (Goodlad, 1979). Still these hopes gradually seemed achievable if their children could get schooling, and they saw negligent teachers making that hope unrealizable.

Teachers had many reasons for their absences from classes and their inability to provide the attention *Dalit* children needed to learn. But prior to reorienting teachers to be responsible, one needs to build-in regular discussion sessions with teachers, students, parents, school management committee, and school supervisors at least twice in a year. The arguments and counter arguments of these discussion sessions naturally provide policy guidelines, and help reorient teachers to their responsibilities. Consecutive discussion sessions also automatically monitor ongoing changes in the teacher's attitude to the schooling of *Dalit* community children, and if those changes are not occuring the administration needs to

decide what other programmes to initiate even as the teachers need to decide what programs to change to ensure children learn.

Concerns were expressed about *Dalit's* experience with the local market system, the fact that their families who were oriented to wage labour on the farms would not have that knowledge to teach them. An introduction of market survey techniques to students so they can analyse businesses and economic opportunities, and initiation of student's Friday fairs inside or outside of the school premises just like local *Haat* in other parts of the country can resolve this issue.

Some people thought that the caste situation and the postion of Dalits in it should be part of the school curriculum, something to be challenged so that a critical consciousness could develop about it. This is really a debatable issue at present since many people are scared that each caste issue will be changed into political chaos and hence contribute to social disharmony. Besides, there could be cultural resistance or social opposition against the discussion on such issues. It may be that the way to break down caste barriers is to have people from different castes working together as equals rather than to be talking about caste, as the successful students in school implicitly claim. However, perhaps sociological and anthropological researchers with an educational orientation could create an atmosphere that would make it possible to talk about these issues. They would need to organize discussion sessions on castism in different colleges, universities, schools, and offices related to community development programs and help teachers and students to understand and do participatory research programs on the caste system. Research findings should be broadcast and telecast in order to make people understand that castism cannot go along with an egalitarian and humanitarian society. Finally, politicians should be gathered for a discussion on castism, and they should be mobilized to organize anti non-touchability movement both locally and nationally. Intellectuals such as teachers in villages and professors in city centers should work to create the atmosphere, politicians should prepare people to accept such a change through their campaigns, and development agencies should take these messages to the people and ensure the *Dalit* communities are no longer 'outcaste' people in Nepali society.

There are other ideas about how schooling could change to meet the needs of people in communities such as Bungkot, like 'learning webs'. But it is difficult to establish a "learning web" in a community where there are neither models of cultural nor technological learning webs available. In this situation, one must rely on reforming or transforming the current school system Reform is possible with almost all types of governments but only radical governments can transform the school system. A comparative study of the education

system of transition states and conditioned capitalist states (Carnoy & Samoff's, 1990; Carnoy & Werthen, 1979) provides evidence that transformation of school in a short time is possible only in transition states. Following their classification of the state system, Nepal would be known as a conditioned capitalist state where reforms in schooling system can be readily acceptable. The radical approach to change schooling system may cause chaos. Thus, in consideration with the present state apparatus, by valuing the experience of Bungkote *Dalit* community, following the suggestions given by the educational policy level people whom I interviewed, and realizing the importance of non-*Dalit* persons' advice in Bungkot, I have sketched above the future mode of schooling for Bungkote *Dalit* community. Since I found schooling was seen as the only hope for Bungkote *Dalit* to to change their life and historic relation to the caste culture I think these changes in schooling are important to make schooling a potent force for a change in *Dalit* community.

Reflections on the Literature

What does this research say which speaks directly back to the literature on social inequality and education, and especially the critical literature which points to a series of problems with schooling in nations of the South such as Nepal? In chapter 2 (supra p. 30) I listed seven points from this literature, all noting negative consequences from the introduction and development of western or 'English' schooling in South nations. Do the experiences of the Bungkote seem to support these statements?

As far as reproduction of the caste, ethnic, and gender structure of the society, it is clear from Bungkot that schooling does not simply 'reproduce' the old caste culture. In many respects it challenges that culture, as does the political system of Nepal today. Yet, old values from that same culture are being used to aid in that change, for example appealing to the Goddess Saraswati to oppose historically accepted treatment of *Dalits* and appealing to traditional ideals of sanskritization as a schooling role which will reduce differences, and by implication disparity, between *Dalit* and other caste groups. There is, however some contradictory evidence as many *Dalit* parents find their children often treated poorly in school, or treated in ways which will contribute to keeping them poor and uneducated. In this sense the few successful *Dalit* scholars who find school a good place to be may not be a full test of the schools contribution to a changed caste culture. At the same time, schooling by no means 'reproduces' *Dalits* willing to follow the family occupations and contributes to the children of these families moving into new jobs, a new 'class' stucture, often far from home. What is not clear from this work, is whether these changes from caste to class structure, actually reflect a continuation of 'lower socioeconomic class' *Dalits* moving simplyh to lower income jobs and 'higher socioeconomic status' *Dalits* moving to

better jobs. The same statement would need to be made in relation to gender oppression; the girls who do well in school insist one suffers in schooling if they 'do badly', not because of gender, and it would require a more careful analysis of how well girls do in school compared to boys before one could say for certain whether schools were reproducing gender inequality.

Regarding the brain drain and the creation of unemployed graduates through schooling this study recognizes that there is a 'brain drain' from Bungkot *Dalit* community to city centers no matter whether they are inside Nepal or in India. But these same *Dalits* have become a source of income, a pride to their community, a good beginning to encourage more schooling in their community as well as contribute financially and in other ways to schooling, and above all a means and an opportunity to get rid of the age-old untouchability. Also, even though the *Dalits* in Bungkot had very little schooling, their schooling provided a route to employment for almost all of the schooled Bungkote *Dalits* which directly contradicted to the findings of the critical interpretive literature. It is possible that if the study were on a *Dalit* community in Kathmandu or some other city, even a migrant *Dalit* community from Bungkot, the results may look very different. But for the *Dalits* who live in Bungkot, there seems to be no issue with schooling and employment. However, like the findings of the critical interpretive literature, this study found the gradual inculcation of western values of modernization and competitiveness among the Bungkote Dalits.

The results from Bungkot are, however, unequivocal about the 'political consciousness' of schooled *Dalits*. Contrary to the arguments of the critical interpretative literature that schooling produces "safe" and docile citizens in place of liberated human beings, this study found that the humble process of liberation has already begun from the schooled Dalits in Bungkot. They began to question why they were made untouchables and are trying to understand who did it and how it happened in history. Besides, they began to organize themselves and started to challenge some cultural traditions such as being forbiddent to enter local temples. They are no longer "safe" persons, accepting high caste values and traditions, but are on the road to compelling the high caste community to rethink the issue of untouchability.

On the other hand this study supports the finding of the critical interpretative literature that school has ignored lower status people's understanding of schooling and its meaning to them, ignored their experience with school curricula, and done little or nothing to help them learn through that curriculum or new curriculum. However, one cannot quite argue that school in Bungkot creates 'culturally alienated' personalities in the terms usually argued in

critical interpretive literature, for the Bungkote *Dalits* had no separate "culture", at least a culture and language, to maintain or lose. And at the same time, exactly what they wanted the school to change was their 'culture', the place and treatment due to them in their caste position and the occupations of their children so their children could be respected. In that sense it is true that schooling was contributing to 'loss of culture' but the *Dalits* would see it more as welcome social change than 'loss'.

And what of the larger literature, the literature on class, caste, schooling and inequality? Although it is apparent that schooling in Bungkot is somehow participating in changing a caste structure to a class structure, and that the caste structure included many elements of class especially if we define class to include the multiple factors identified by Olin Wright and Giddens, and that both Ogbu and Bourdieu speak somewhat to the experience of *Dalit* children in Bungkot classrooms, the study does not provide a clear direction for understanding this transition from caste to class and the place of schooling in it. It would require more thoeretical work to determine the relationships among these diverse literatures which would provide a full theory of schooling, as well as a number of empirical studies each pinpointing a specific issue to develop more adequate theory in the area. This study has been much more of an exploratory nature, hopefully raising many issues but leaving many, many unanswered.

Reflections on Reflections

It is true that I have seen the caste system as the major structural problem in Nepali society, not the economy or the political system or even the educational system. Besides, I have concluded that a lot of intellectual work related to Hindu teachings about caste and the cosmogenic relations of the world are one of the main ways to address this problem, as well as some specific changes in schooling.

I think that my conclusions come from my field work in Bungkot as well as the other data which I gathered and discussions I had with eminent educators in Nepal, for in all these observations and conversations caste seemed central to the way people talked about themselves, their experiences, and their relations with other people. But I know that I am a Brahman; not a rich Brahman but a Brahman from an agricultural family much like the families in Bungkot. Still it is my caste position to be an intellectual, to seek to understand the cosmogenic structure of the universe. It may be that is why the intellectual work which I talk about above seems so important to me, but I do know that other approaches, other theories must be kept in mind.

I also know that the fact the poorest Dalits in Bungkot do not speak of social class, nor the most disadvantaged women of gender, does not mean that social class and gender discrimination is not part of the social situation which makes their life difficult. But I think that a thesis like this should speak to the people of Bungkot in ways that they can understand and perhaps use the ideas to reflect on their reality. Thus, as with the strategy of 'letting' and even making modern school work effectively with Dalits despite its well known problems, for the Dalits themselves will eventually see those problems and begin to work against them, the conclusions of this thesis primarily work with ideas that are familiar now to the people of Bungkot. If they can think about these issues this way, and develop a critical consciousness about their part in continuing the caste system, they will eventually find other ways to understand and make positive changes in their community, perhaps ways which focus on social class or gender as well as other concepts I cannot imagine right now.

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Appendix I Glossary of non-English Words

Aaran	blacksmith's workshop
Abrahman	those who do not respect Ved
Achar Dharm	rules of custom & ceremony
Adarshata	unseeability
Agrahar	arable land donated for school
Akarman	those who do not perform duty
Akshitadasyakaryata	doing socially degraded work
Amanush	those who deserves low social status
Ananda	pure bliss
Antaja	last
Aphnumanchhe	a person who favours the case of another
Asahasanasyata	unseatability i.e who cannot sit with high caste people
asprishya	non-touchable
Atharva Ved	Veda which deals with innovation and priestly work
Aurvedic	Ved which deals with medicine
Ayajan	one who does not perform *yagnya* (sacrifice)
Babu	a respected word for a man
Bahun	Brahman
Baraju	ancestor/an addressing word of a Sarki to Brahman
Baya	a practice of Damai caste people of Nepal to beg door to door by playing their traditional music.
Bhagwat Geeta	a religious book
Bhansun	influence people by some external force
Bhattarak	a person in charge of maintaining caste rule
Bista	the high caste household for which a *Dalit* works
Biswakarma	God who created world/ a surname for Kami

Brahman	high caste people in Varnashram system
Bungkote	Bungkot dwellers
Byabahar Dharma	proper law to follow in practical life
Chakari	to appease people by all means
Chautara	elevated platform around a tree
Chhoichhito	a tradition of sprinkling water to be pure
Chhoralai	to son
Chhorilai	to daughter
Chhunahuune	touchable
Chhunanahune	non-touchable
Chit	pure consciousness
Chura	bangle
Dalit	a scheduled caste person
Damai	one of the castes of the *Dalit* community
Damai	tailor caste and traditional musician
Das	slave
Dashain	a great Hindu festival
Dasyu	robber
Dekhne Goru	an ox which sees things
Desh Dunia	different country & different people
Dhami	a spiritual faith healer
Doka/Doko	big basket
Doli	a device for carrying a bride or groom in a traditional village marriage. It is carried by two persons, one at each end.
Dravidian	non-Aryan groups of people who lived in India

Dwapar Yug	a period of 12,96,000 years in Hindu legend when Lord Ram was born.
Galliko Kukur	stray dog
Ghaiya	high land rice
Gorakhapatra	national newspaper
Gotra	an ancestor's name that links a group of exogamous people
Gun	quality
Guru Purnima	teachers' day
Gwali	a cattle shade having a V shape roof
Harijan	God's children/*Dalit*
Hasia	sickle
Jadau	a word to of greeting used by Damai, Kami, and Sarki when speaking to high caste people
Jamana	period, time
Jati Dharma	caste religion
Jhankri	a spiritual faith healer
Jivatma	individual self
Kadaro	an offspring from Kami husband and Sarki wife
Kakha	lap
Kalam	pen
Kali Yug	period of 4,32,000 years in Hindu legend
Kami	blacksmith
Kanla	end of terrace to a high land
Kano Goru	blind ox
Kapi	copy
Karma	fate or work
Karmakanda	priestly work

Kasma Hau?	to which caste do you belong?
Kegarne	what to do? It is fate.
Khangre	a measuring basket that holds about 15 kg corn
Kharcha	grocery
Kharka	grazing land
Kholsa	dry ditch or rift of a land
Kitab	book
Kot	fort at the top of mountain
Kshatriya	ruling caste people in Varnashram
Kula Dharma	ancestral religion
Kulin	rich/ high status person
Maach	a cattle shade with a flat roof
Madhyama	Sanskrit level equal to matriculation
Maiya	a loving/respected word for a woman
Malik	master
Mantrik	based on *Mantra* (secret knowledge)
Masine	can be enslaved or killed
Muktisopan	ladder to Nirvana
Namasine	cannot be enslaved or killed
Namlo	basket holding rope
Nepallngregi	mixing Nepali and English words in speaking
Nibritti Marga	a path of life to salvation or Nirvana
Niju	a practice almost like a bonded labor system.
Nimna	poor/low
Paap	spiritual demerit
Pakha	forest
Pali	a shade to make a Verandah

Pancham Varna	fifth Varna
Panchayat	political system in Nepal between 1960-1990
Panichalne	waterable/people with whom high castes can drink water
Paninachalne	non-waterable/people with whom high castes can't drink water
Paramatma	empirical self
Pathi	A measuring pot that holds about 2.5 kg of rice or corn.
Pindhi	verandah
Prabasi	a person of Nepali origin but an Indian citizen
Prabritti Marga	a path of life to material joy and pleasure
Prakshipta Aansha	addendum to religious text
Prashat	a learned person who knows four Vedas, economics, and criminology, and does research
Prayaschit Dharma	rules regarding atonement and penance
Punarjanma	re-birth
Punnya	spiritual merit
Puru-sukta	addendum to Rigved
Raja	passion
Rajashi	promoting passion
Rambharosha	hope only with God
Rigved	oldest Veda which deals with terrestrial and celestial knowledge
Rodighar	traditional night club of Gurung
Ropani	a measure of land (3876 sq. feet)
Samved	one of the four Vedas
Sanatanism	an oral tradition transmitting ancient knowledge practice and values.
Sarki	cobbler

Sat	pure existence
Satwa	truth
Satwik	promoting truth
Satya Yug	period of 17,28,000 years in Hindu legend
Satyawati	land of truth
Shaiva	follower of Lord Shiva
Shiksha	education
Sisnadeva	a person who worships the phallus
Smashanavasyata	living only in or near burial grounds
Sottar	twigs
Sprishya	touchable
Sudra	the last or lowest group of persons in Varnashram
Swabhav	nature
Syaula	smaller than a branch and bigger than twigs
Tama	anger
Tamashi	promoting anger
Tamasuk	a traditional agreement paper to make a loan and sell land
Tapovan	land of meditation
Tara	but
Tatha	or
Thaan	idol of God or Goddess with or without a temple
Thado Siyo	a traditional practice to plow on contract
Thulo Aakas	big sky
Thulo Manchhe	great person
Tola	a small unit of a village
Treta Yug	period of 8, 64,000 years in Hindu legend, when Lord Krishna was born

Tuki	a small kerosene lamp
Vaishnav	followers of Lord Vishnu
Vaishya	third group of caste people in Varnashram
Varnasankar	offspring of intercaste marriage
Varnashram	a Hindu socio-religious system
Vikram Sambat (VS)	Nepali era which is 57 years 8 month 14 days ahead of the Christian era
Yagnya	sacrifice
Yajurved	Veda which deals with priestly work

Appendix II Research Instruments

Table 6: Household Survey Form

S N	Name	FS	Age	Sex M F	Sch. Level Non-lit Lit	Literacy Source Self CB ALP School	Class attended Local Outside	Yrs of Schooling Local Outside
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								

Note: FS= Family Status; Sch= School; Non-lit= Non-literate; Lit= Literate; CB= Chelibeti (Out of school girl) Program; ALP= Adult Literacy Program.

Table 7: Unstructured Interview Questions

First Round Discussion

* What do you mean by schooling?

* What did schooling do for you and your community people?

* Do you know who initiated schooling in this community?

* Do you know what his/her intention or purpose was in initiating school?

*How do you react tot his intention or purpose?

* How do you feel about your own schooling?

* What did you expect to gain from schooling for yourself?

* In what respect were your expectations achieved?

* Could you tell the reason why your expectations were achieved from schooling?

* Could you tell me any expectations that you had had from schooling which were not achieved?

* Why do you think these expectations from schooling were not achieved?

*Where does schooling fit in the life of you, yourself, and your community people?

* Do you find that schooling has brought changes to your community people?

* If yes, could you tell me what they are?

* If no, could you tell me why you think that is the case?

* Do you think some of the people in the community have gained more benefit from schooling than others?

* If yes who are they?

* Could you tell me why they got more benefit from schooling than others?

* If all the people in the community are getting equal benefit from schooling, could you tell me why there are so few girls in schools, so few literate women, and so few persons who are schooled in this community?

* How do you find the activities of yourself and the schooled person in this community? For example:

- Do they get employment?

- If yes, where do they go for employment?

-If they go outside the community for employment how do you and your community people react to that?

* If they are unemployed what do you think about the value of schooling to them?

* How do you find the attitude of the schooled people including yourself towards social values such as paying respect to elderly people, and praying to God?

* Could you tell me why they do or do not pay such respect or pray?

* Are you aware of the politics of schooling, that is ways in which people have kept *Dalits* out of school or made it hard for them to go to school?

* If yes, could you tell me who engaged in politics such as this against you and your community people?

* Do you know reasons why people would do politics through schooling against you and your community people?

* Do you find the people with more schooling including you participate more in politics?

* How do you see the effects of schooling in promoting critical reflection or docility?

* What kinds of citizens do you and your community expect from schooling?

* What role do you find schooling plays in making your "community type" of people a citizen?

* Did schooling inject western curricular values such as competitiveness and individualism in your community and your personal life?

* If yes, could you tell me about it?

*How do you find the economic condition of the schooled person?

-Do you find it is improved?

- If yes, could you tell me the reason for their improved economy?

-If you think that the economic condition of the schooled person is not improved, could you tell me the reasons for their non- improved economic conditions?

- Do you think that this community is getting richer because of the more schooled person's incomes?

-If not, what could be the reasons for this community not becoming richer?

* Finally, do you have anything to tell me about the expansion and effects of schooling on you and to your community?

Second Round Discussion

* What was the purpose or intention behind the activities of those people who opened school in this village?

* How do you find the importance of schooling for your community?

* What was the contribution of your community to this school?

* What was the role of schooled high caste people in your community?

* How do you compare a schooled person of your community with someone from a high caste community?

* How do you differentiate traditionally schooled from newly schooled people?

Third Round Discussion

* Who initiated schooling in your caste group?

* What benefit did he or she get from schooling?

* Why are your caste people reluctant to send girls to school?

* How do you find the school's behavior towards your children?

* What should a school do to school your community children?

* What do you think about castism?

* How do you assess the effects of schooling in your caste?

Final Round Discussion

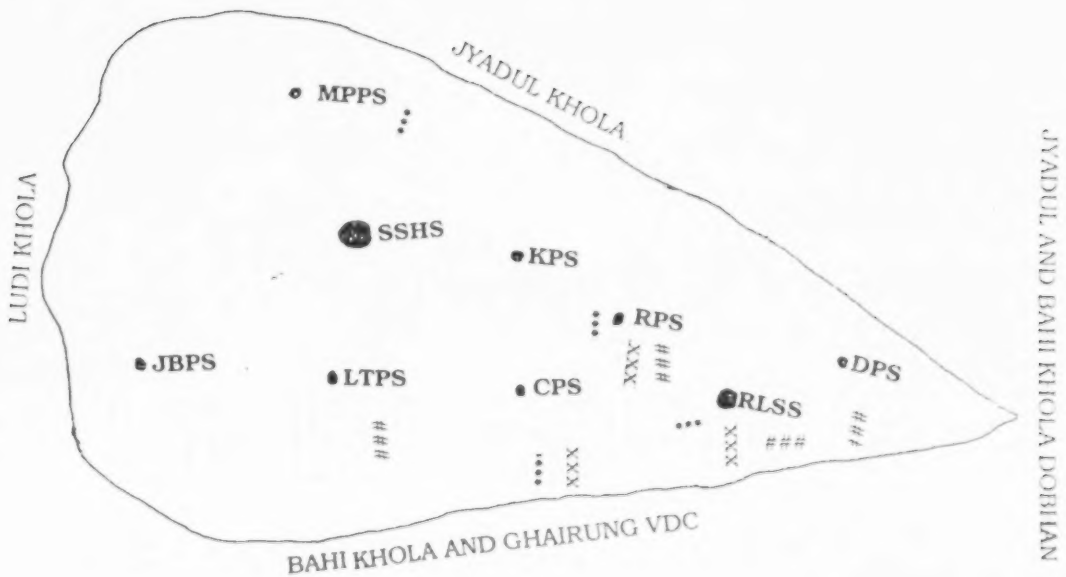
* Why do you prefer schooling as much as you have said?

* Who do you blame if your schooled children are unemployed?

* How do you see the role of schooling in our *Sanatan* (oral religious) tradition?

Appendix III Descriptive Data on Bungkot

Figure 6: Map of Bungkot



Schools in Bungkot VDC

MPPS	Makalpur Primary School
SSHS	Sahid Smriti High School
KPS	Khabdi Primary School
RPS	Ramche Primary School
DPS	Dahale Primary School
RLSS	Rameshwari Lower Secondary School
CPS	Chandika Primary School
LTPS	Lakhan Thapa Primary School
JBPS	Jaubari Primary School

***Dalit's* Settlement**

•••	Damai
xxx	Kami
###	Sarki

Table 8: Ethnic Composition of the Population* (in Percentage)

Ethnic/language Group	Gorkha	Bungkot
Brahman & Kshatriya	33	27
Gurung	23	4
Newar	9	28
Magar	12	17
Baram	01	-
Miyan (Muslim)	.93	-
Kumhal	1.30	-
Praja (Chepang)	0.80	-
Others	5.10	14
Dalits as a Group		
Damai	2	1
Kami	6.2	2
Sarki	7	7

* In Bungkot, there are 8039 people (3649 male and 3036 female).

* In Gorkha, there are 252524 people (121212 male and131312 female).

Source:- District Development Committee (1992). *District Profile of Gorkha.* (In Nepali). Gorkha, Nepal. District Development Committee.

Nepal: Central Bureau of Statistics (1991). *Statistical year book of Nepal.* Kathmandu. National Planning Commission Secretariat.

Table 9: Schooling Status of *Dalit* Males and Females(%)

a) Male Schooling

Level	Nepal			Gorkha			Bungkot		
	Damai	Kami	Sarki	Damai	Kami	Sarki	Damai	Kami	Sarki
Primary	22	21	20	25	23	23	42	43	49
Secondary	23	25	23	16	20	18	55	91	45
S. L. C.	7	10	8	13	10	13	**	3	7
I. A.	24	28	20	*	14	10	**	**	33
B. A. & +	46	41	51	**	**	*	**	**	**
No. of 6 + Pop	142,210	373, 351	106, 658	2879	4377	5344	144	81	271

b) Female Schooling

Level	Nepal			Gorkha			Bungkot		
	Damai	Kami	Sarki	Damai	Kami	Sarki	Damai	Kami	Sarki
Primary	9	7	6	13	10	8	36	36	38
Secondary	17	16	12	6	9	8	2	32	18
S L. C.	6	7	6	4	2	8	**	F	6
I. A.	14	25	20	*	*	*	**	**	**
B. A. & +	68	44	100	*	*	*	**	**	**
No. of 6 + Pop	153, 418	395, 031	115, 262	3123	4841	6127	126	77	256

Notes: * o/n **0/0 F= One girl appeared in the SLC Exam but was unable to pass.

Sources:-

a) For Gorkha

District Development Committee (1992). *District Profile of Gorkha.* (In Nepali). Gorkha, Nepal: District Development Committee.

b) For Bungkot

Field Survey (1995).

c) For Nepal

Nepal: Central Bureau of Statistics (1991). *Statistical year book of Nepal.* Kathmandu National Planning Commission Secretariat.

Table 10: Schooled Bungkote *Dalits*, where Employed

Damai	Kami	Sarki
a) In Kullu Bhadari, India	**a) In Urisa, India**	**a) Delhi, India**
Khadga B. Pariyar	Baburam Biswakarma	Arjun
Nanimaya (wife)	Hiraman Biswakarma	Bhakta Bahadur Nepali
Santa B. (son)	Jit B. Biswakarma	Bharat Bahadur Nepali
Kumar (son)	Juthe Biswakarma	Bhote Malbule
Narayan (son)	Krishna B. Biswakarma	Chandra Bahadur
Tolak B. Pariyar	Lekh B. Biswakarma	Dhan Bahadur
Nanimaya (wife)	Man B. Biswakarma	Dipak Nepali
Prem Bahadur (wife)	Nil B. Biswakarma	Dil Bahadur
b) In Delhi, India	Purna B. Biswakarma	Gore (immigrated to Delhi)
Bel Bahadur	Ramji Biswakarma	Likhuri (wife)
Biraj Bahadur	**b) In New Delhi, India**	Dambare (son)
Ek Bahadur	Ram B. Biswakarma	Sanu (son)
Krishna Bahadur	**c) In Kathmandu, Nepal**	Kali (daughter)
Kul Bahadur	Gyan Bahadur	Putali (daughter)
Purna Bahadur	Hira Bahadur	Gore Nepali
c) In Bardhaman, India	Hom Bahadur	Jhilke Malbule
Gambhir Bahadur	Kul Bahadur	Jit Bahadur
Gore Pariyar		Juthe Nepali
Krishna Bahadur		Kaipa Nepali
Krishna Bahadur		Kali (wife)
d) In Culcutta, India		Man Kumari (daughter)
Baburam		Kantare Malbule
Dalle		Keshar Bahadur

Iswar Bahadur

Jit Bahadur

e) In Nagaland, India

Krishna Bahadur

Indra Bahadur

f) In Bangladesh

Krishna Bahadur

g) In Kathmandu, Nepal

Bachhuram

Basu Pariyar

Bharat Pariyar

Dambar Bahadur

Dhruba Bahadur

Govind Pariyar

Jung Bahadur

Krishna Bahadur

Ram Bahadur

Resham Bahadur

Rudra/Ram Bahadur

Krishna Bahadur Nepali

Kul Bahadur Koirala

Lok Bahadur Nepali

Raju (son)

Man Bahadur

Mithhu Bahadur

Mitthu Bahadur

Nara Bahadur

Prem Ramtel

Ram Bahadur Nepali

Ramji Nepali

Ratna Bahadur

Rolak Bahadur

Sagune's first son

Sagune's second son

Sitaram Nepali

Sitaram Nepali

Yam Bahadur Nepali

Sukamaya (wife)

b) In Indian Army, India

Yam Bahadur Magrati

c) In Nagaland, India

Bir Bahadur Roka

Dhan Bahadur

Ram Bahadur

c) In Punjab, India

Ramchandra

d) In Calcutta, India

Buddhi Bahadur Uparkoti

Ram Bahadur Uparkoti

Dilliram Nepali

Krishna Bahadur

Bhim Bahadur

Ramkrishna

Khadka Bahadur

Lure Nepali

e) In Bardhaman, India

Hiralal Nepali

Khadga Bahadur

f) In Kathmandu, Nepal

Bhim Bahadur

Chandra Bahadur

Chyame (Gopal's brother)

Dil Bahadur

Ratna Bahadur

g) In Hetauda, Nepal

Gomawati Nepali*

Ram Bahadur

h) In Manang, Nepal

Chitra Bahadur

Dil Bahadur

Note: Watchperson, police, army, peon, are the major posts for employment for Bungkote *Dalits*.

Table 11: Names of Schooled Graduates in Bungkot

a)English Graduates

SLC	IA	BA	MA
Babulal Shrestha	Akhil Rana	Arjun Bhatta	Baburam Shrestha
Balaram Lamsal	Ambika Thapa*	Ashok Wagle	Bishnu P. Khanal
Bholaraj Dhakal	Anta Narayan Shrestha	Ashokbabu Rana	Buddhiman Shrestha
Bishnu Rana	Arjun K. C.	Bhojraj Khanal	Devendra P. Khanal
Chinimaya Thapa*	Arjun Prasad Tiwari	Binodbabu Shrestha	Gyanendra Wanta
Dhan Bahadur Shrestha	Arunbabu Shrestha	Bir Bahadur Thapa	Lal Bahadur Thapa
Dhiraj Babu Shrestha	Badri Khanal	Bishwa Nath Wagle	Navaraj Khanal
Dul Bahadur Gurung	Badri Prasad Regmi	Bishwababu K. C.	Rajendra P. Khanal
Faudasingh Shrestha	Balaram Tiwari	Bishwamitra Khanal	Sitaram Bhatta
Ganesh Bahadur Shrestha	Bhagawati khanal*	Buddhiman Shrestha	
Ganesh Dutta Khanal	Bharat Bahadur Shrestha	Chet Bahadur Rana	
Ganesh Lamsal	Bhim Bahadur Gurung	Chhabilal Omgai	
Ganesh Thapa	Bhoj Bahadur Shrestha	Deergharaj Wagle	
Govind Omgai	Bindu Prasad Omgai	Devendra Prasad Adhikari	
Gyanendra Shrestha	Binod Wagle	Devendra Wagle	
Hari Bahadur Khadka	Binodbabu Omgai	Devraj Wagle	
Harka Bahadur Gurung	Binodbabu Wagle	Dhalak Prasad Adhikari	
Himlal Shrestha	Bishnu Bahadur Khanal	Dhan Bahadur Shrestha	
Indra Bahadur Thapa	Bishnu Bahadur Shrestha	Dhana Prasad Adhikari	
Iswar Thapa	Bishnu Kumar Shrestha	Dhanraj Khanal	
Jhalak Bahadur Shrestha	Bishnu Prasad Tiwari	Durga Khanal*	
Jhalak Prasad Omgai	Bishnu Thapa	Gajendra Lamsal	
Jiwan Babu Shrestha	Bulendraraj Bhandari	Ganesh Bahadur Shrestha	
Kajiram Thapa	Chandrakala Khanal*	Ganga Prasad Adhikari	

Kamal Thapa

Kamala Khanal*

Khil Bahadur Shrestha

Krishna Bahadur Aale

Madan Prasad Lamsal

Madhukar Wanta

Man Bahadur Gurung

Man Bahadur Shrestha

Manilal Shrestha

Min Bahadur Rana

Minlal Shrestha

Narayan Bhakta Wagle

Navaraj Shrestha

Nirman Jung Shrestha

Om Jung Bhandari

Rajendra Khanal

Rajkumar Thapa

Raju Babu Shrestha

Ram Bahadur Rana

Santa Bahadur Shrestha

Saraswati Khanal*

Shambhu Khanal

Sher Bahadur Biswakarma**

Sher Jung Bhandari

Shivaraj Wagle

Shonem Raj Wagle

Sunita Thapa*

Chet Bahadur Shrestha

Chitra Bahadur Gurung

Dhan Bahadur Thapa

Deva prasad Adhikari

Dharmaraj Tiwari

Dineshbabu Shrestha

Dipendra Wagle

Dol Bahadur Shrestha

Durga Bahadur Aale

Ganesh Bahadur K. C.

Ganesh Rana

Gita Khanal*

Gokulbabu Khadka

Gopal Bahadur Gurung

Harichandra Tiwari

Harishankar Tiwari

Hasta Bahadur Gurung

Hiramaya Itani (Tiwari)*

Hom Prasad Pokhrel

Indra Prasad Tiwari

Ishwar Prasad Adhikari

Ishwar Prasad Lamichhane

Ishwar Raj Wagle

Ishwar Thapa

Ishwor Thapa

Jaya Kumar K. C.

Jung Bahadur Thapa

Gautam Prasad Tiwari

Gautamraj Wagle

Goma Shrestha*

Gopilal Shrestha

Gyanendra Bhandari

Gyanendra Prasad Khanal

Hari Prasad Wagle

Haribabu K. C.

Hom Bahadur Thapa

Ishwar Thapa

Keshav Wagle

Kshetra Bahadur Bhandari

Kshetra Kumari Gurung

Kumarbabu Shrestha

Lok Bahadur Gurung

Mahendrababu K. C.

Narayan Kumar Shrestha

Navaraj Khadka

Navin Rana

Padam Bahadur Shrestha

Parvati Khanal*

Prem Kumar Shrestha

Puma Jung Bhandari

Rajan Lamsal

Rajendra Wagle

Rajubabu Gurung

Ramchandra Khanal

Surya Nath Dhakal

Tekandra Bahadur Thapa

Tirtharaj Wagle

Uddhav Jung Bhandari

Yam Bahadur Magrati**

Yan Prasad Tiwari

Kalpana Khanal*

Kamal Prasad Omgai

Kashinath Omgai

Khadga Bir Singh**

Kham Bahadur Thapa

Khil Bahadur Shrestha

Khil Bahadur Shrestha

Khil Bahadur Tiwari

Kishorbabu K. C.

Kishorchandra Khanal

Krishna Bahadur Shrestha

Krishna Bahadur Shrestha

Krishna Prasad Khanal

Krishna Prasad Omgai

Krishna Prasad Tiwari

Kul Bahadur Thapa

Kulraj Regmi

Lilamaya Shrestha*

Luma Kanta Khanal

Manju Lamsal*

Mira Bhatta*

Nanda Prasad Tiwari

Naniram Tiwari

Nara Devi Shrestha*

Narayan Kumar Shrestha

Narayan Prasad Bhattarai

Narayan Prasad Omgai

Ramchandra Tiwari

Rishiram Khanal

Rishiram Khanal

Rishiram Wagle

Rohini Khanal*

Sangita Khanal*

Shankar Bahadur Goranja

Sitaram Shrestha

Surendra Prasad Tiwari

Surya Bahadur Dhakal

Tara Bahadur Lamsal

Thakur Prasad Adhikari

Tikaram Adhikari

Tikaram Bhatta

Upendraraj Wagle

Upendraraj Wagle

Yam Bahadur Rana

Narayan Shrestha

Navaraj Omgai

Navaraj Wagle

Nil Kantha Lamichhane

Phatta Bahadur Gurung

Prem Chandra K.C

Prem Narayan Shrestha

Prem Prasad Pokhrel

Prithvi Narayan Shrestha

Punya Nidhi Omgai

Puma Kumar Shrestha

Radha Kumari Shrestha*

Rajendra Prasad Lamsal

Rajeshwor Khanal

Rajubabu Gurung

Rajubabu Shrestha

Ram Bahadur Shrestha

Ram Prasad Adhikari

Ram Prasad Dhakal

Ram Prasad Tiwari

Rameshwor Wagle

Ramsharan Tiwari

Renuka Rana*

Resham Bahadur Shrestha

Reshambabu Omgai

Rishilal Shrestha

Sabita Adhikari*

Sangeeta Lamsal*

Sanukaji Shrestha

Sharmila Khanal*

Sharmila Lamsal*

Shivaraj Regmi

Shukra Kumar Shrestha

Sujan Lamsal

Surya Prasad Bagale

Thakur Prasad Bhattarai

Tika Bahadur Gurung

Tirtharaj Bhandari

b) Sanskrit Graduates

Badri Prasad Khanal

Dipakbabu Khanal

Ganesh Dutta Khanal

Lila Kanta Khanal

Parshuram Lamshal

Ramesh Wagle

Ramji Khanal

Ishwor Prasad Lamshal

Jivanath Wagle

Dhrubaraj Wagle

Dumberraj Adhikari

Ek Dutta Khanal

Ekraj Regmi

Hom Nath Khanal

Jivanraj Wagle (B.ED)

Radha Prasad Lamshal

Ram Prasad Regmi

Bhojraj Wagle

Chiranjibi Wagle (B.L)

* woman

** *Dalit* male

Appendix IV Educational Data on Nepal

Table 12: Illiteracy % by Caste Population of Nepal Age 6 and Over, 1991

Caste/Ethnic Group	Total	Total Male	Total Female	% Illiterate	%Male Illit	%FemIllit
Baniya	83,107	43,853	39254	52.6	36.9	71.0
Bengali	6,646	3,503	3143	48.4	37.0	61.2
Bhote	10,223	4,915	5308	67.9	51.9	83.7
Bote	5,327	2,680	2647	77.9	68.0	87.9
Brahman (Hill)	1,995,774	980,963	1,014,811	37.8	22.3	52.8
Brahman (Terai)	137,438	72,463	64975	37.5	23.2	53.5
Chamar*	164,636	84,081	80555	89.2	82.0	96.6
Chepang	29,033	14,889	14144	85.3	78.2	92.8
Chhetri	2,437,349	1,182,318	1,255,031	54.2	35.8	71.5
Churaote	1,462	744	718	51.2	31.3	72.0
Damai*	295,626	142,210	153418	71.0	58.4	82.8
Danuwar	41,143	19,743	21400	74.5	59.0	88.8
Darai	8,685	4,337	4348	62.6	48.9	76.3
Dhanak	110,855	35,959	53204	76.3	62.3	91.5
Dhimal	44,095	7,140	6955	60.0	45.1	75.3
Dhobi*	62,034	32,195	29839	78.4	66.6	91.2
Dhusadh*	75,031	38,592	36439	89.2	82.9	95.9
Gaine*	3,639	1,757	1082	68.6	54.7	81.6
Gangain	18,602	9,501	9101	63.8	45.9	82.5
Gurung	376,057	178,614	197443	52.5	38.3	65.4
Haluwai	36,169	18,880	17189	58.7	42.4	75.6

Caste/Ethnic Group	Total	Total Male	Total Female	% Illiterate	%Male Illit	%FemIllit
Jirel	3,983	1,935	2048	65.0	47.1	81.8
Kami*	768,382	373,351	395031	73.1	59.7	85.7
Kanu	56,977	29,867	27110	69.6	54.6	86.0
Kayastha	44,290	22,459	21831	35.0	24.4	45.9
Kewat	82,254	42,299	39955	77.1	63.8	91.2
Khatway*	53,659	27,507	26152	87.6	79.3	96.2
Kumal	61,278	29,911	31367	69.3	56.1	81.8
Kumhar	58,283	29,920	28363	71.3	58.3	85.0
Kurmi	135,927	71,351	64576	73.9	59.6	89.2
Kuswaha	166,629	86,509	80120	70.9	55.2	87.8
Lepcha	3,978	2,396	1582	56.5	51.2	64.0
Limbu	244,172	118,363	125809	52.4	36.0	67.8
Magar	1,087,402	522,154	565248	59.8	43.3	75.1
Majhi	44,375	21,828	22547	76.7	65.1	88.0
Mallah	88,323	45,784	42539	87.2	79.1	95.8
Marwadi	25,265	13,711	11554	11.5	7.8	15.9
Musahar*	112,886	56,893	55993	95.1	92.7	97.5
Muslim	517,504	267,513	249991	77.0	66.1	88.6
Newar	890,189	442,240	447949	39.0	25.8	51.9
no caste	2,631	1,501	1130	32.9	28.5	38.7
not stated	4,119	2,219	1900	51.6	38.8	66.6
Others (Mt.)	1,462	758	704	57.1	44.7	70.5
Others (Terai)	510,499	264,424	246075	77.5	66.1	89.7

Caste/Ethnic Group	Total	Total Male	Total Female	% Illiterate	%Male Illit	%FemIllit
others (hill)	150,321	73,272	77050	65.3	51.3	78.7
Rai	431,851	211,629	220222	54.6	39.5	69.2
Rajbanshi	68,162	34,262	33900	61.9	44.3	79.7
Rajbhar	27,090	13,910	13180	74.8	60.5	89.9
Raji	2,704	1,389	1315	77.8	67.5	88.7
Rajput	46,362	24,692	21670	47.6	33.4	63.8
Raute	2,295	575	1720	73.5	48.1	81.9
Sanyasi	139,190	73,394	75796	54.8	36.7	72.3
Sarki*	221,920	106,658	115262	74.9	61.9	86.8
Sheikh	7,653	3,740	3913	73.6	63.0	83.7
Sherpa	91,588	45,444	46144	63.2	48.4	77.8
Sudhi, Kalwar	133,250	70,190	63060	54.7	37.2	74.2
Sunuwar	33,041	16,475	17166	61.5	45.8	96.6
Tamang	828,368	413,523	414845	71.3	58.0	84.5
Teli	205,106	107,513	97593	62.9	45.4	82.3
Thakali	11,983	5,758	6225	37.3	25.2	48.5
Thakuri	245,607	119,660	125947	52.5	33.6	71.4
Thami	15,609	7,663	7946	75.3	63.5	86.6
Tharu	964,641	434,775	477366	71.6	56.0	87.5
Total Nepal	15,145,071	7,522,617	7,622,454	59.9	45.2	74.3
Wadi*	5,659	2,678	2981	78.4	67.6	88.2
Yadav/Ahir	624,670	329,495	295175	72.9	58.4	89.0

* Asterick indicates a Nepal *Dalit* community; Source:- Computed from available statistics from Central Bureau of Statistics/Nepal (1993). *Population census, 1991: Social characteristics table*. Vol. I part VII. Kathmandu: National Planning Commission Secretariat.

Table 13: Curricular Objectives for Schooling Nepali Children

Date	Primary (I-V)	Lower Secondary (VI-VII)	Secondary (VIII-X)
Prior to 1951	**a) for Language Schools** * To impart knowledge about alphabet and numerals **b) for Basic Schools** * To teach 3Rs * To integrate education and work **c) For English Schools** * To develop communicative skills * To teach 3Rs * To provide general knowledge about history and geography.	* To provide communication skills in English * To develop test for arts * To engage in sports activities on a regular basis	* To provide communication skills in English * To make proficient in one oriental language * To impart a good knowledge of the Nepali language * To provide skill training (emphasized in the basic education system) * To provide knowledge about healthful living * To prepare for higher education
1951-1961	* To develop communicative skills * To instill knowledge about health and hygiene * To develop appreciation for fine arts	* To impart a knowledge of science * To strengthen communicative skills in English * To provide preliminary knowledge of physiology * To impart knowledge on healthful living * To impart skill in fine arts	* To develop communicative skill in English and Nepali language * To impart citizenship training * To develop a sense of appreciating fine arts * To provide occupational training
1961-1971	* To provide knowledge of science * To develop economic competency through vocational education * To develop aesthetic competencies	* To arouse interest in and provide elementary knowledge in a vocational area * To familiarize with Nepali culture and to develop a democratic way of thinking * To provide citizenship training * To provide for personal and physical development * To foster scientific thinking	* To enhance proficiency in English and in Nepali language * To promote knowledge of general science * To impart training in one of the vocational areas

1971-1981	* To impart literacy * To promote social and physical development * To develop scientific attitude	* To facilitate character building * To inculcate a spirit of loyalty to the king and the country * to develop a sense of discipline and responsibility * to arouse respect for habits of labor	* To produce skilled workers for national development * To produce citizens who are loyal to the country, king and Panchayat system * To promote national language, literature, culture and art * To provide terminal general education to the majority of the youths of the nation * To promote general culture of Nepal
1981 to Date	* To impart literacy * To develop a sense of devotion and loyalty to the country, king, and God * To inculcate discipline and build character * To create interest in art and crafts, and sports * To maintain physical and mental health	* To facilitate character building by inculcating a spirit of loyalty to the king, country, and God * To develop a sense of discipline * To make aware of and create respect for moral and cultural values * To arouse respect for others' feelings and opinions * To foster rational thinking	* To generate respect for labor * To prepare productive citizens for national development * To develop faith in God, loyalty to the country, and king * To develop a sense of discipline * To enable students to opt a higher education major with the provision of a wide variety of subjects to choose from * To lay the foundation for higher education * To develop such high level qualities as self-reliance, honesty, co-operativeness, world brotherhood and responsibility * To bring about national integration by harmonizing different economic and social interests * To strengthen national solidarity by integrating multicultural traditions and by bringing about uniformity in the intellectual tradition

Source: Nepal: National Education Committee (1985: 10, 18, 24). *School level curriculum: A historical perspective*. Kathmandu: Author.

Table 14: Cultural Reproduction in Nepali Textbooks

(a) Use of Hierarchical Language

Naniho! (hi boys and girls) you do it. This is a type of language that teaches students to maintain the hierarchical language.

Grade	Textbook	Page No.
6	Moral Education	23, 46, 58, 62
6	Nepali	2, 6, 7, 17
5	Social studies	23, 50, 67, 74
5	Moral Education	16, 54, 58
5	Nepali	18
4	Science & health	32
4	Social Studies	24
4	English	75

(b) Imposition of Religious Values

There are contents that impose Hindu religious values by teaching the students that they should worship *Sarasawati, Laxmi, Shiva,* and *Ganesh.*

Grade	Textbook	Page No.
6	Moral Education	35, 36, 79
5	Moral Education	
5	Social Studies	73

(c) Use of Gender Language

One can see gender language in Nepali textbooks. The exemplary sentences are:- man is helping to preserve himself. Steam power was the first man made power.

Grade	Textbook	Page No.
9 & 10	English Part I	46
9 & 10	English Part II	166, 243, 255, 256,
8	Civic Life	5, 67, 73
6	Moral Education	48
1	Nepali	110 - 113

(d) Imposition of Do's and Don'ts

There is a cultural imposition or order included in the textbooks. These contents specify do's and don'ts such as obey your parents, teachers, and elders, and follow the doings of Shravan Kumar and Ramchandra, the Hindu ideals for obeying parents.

Grade	Textbook	Page No.
8	Civic Life	5
6	Moral Education	37, 72
6	Nepali	98 - 100
4	Moral Education	10, 47 - 49
3	Nepali	110 - 113
2	Nepali	109
1	Nepali	73

(e) Introduction of Gender Role

In some of the textbooks, there is presentation of the gender roles of the macro- society such as *Gori*, a woman is in kitchen and Bal Bahadur, a man is smoking *Hooka* or Mohan's mother cleans house, cooks rice and so on.

Grade	Textbook	Page No.
9 & 10	English Part II	213
6	English	45, 52

Appendix V Chronology of *Dalit's* Movement in Nepal

Period	Activities
1775-1806 (1832-1863)	King Rana Bahadur Shah (1778 -1798) opposed caste system and launched anti-caste movement by following *Joshamani Santa Parampara* (one of the Hindu traditions).
1939-1940 (1996-1997)	*Dalits* began to organize. They formed an association called *Sarbajan Sangh* under the leadership of Bhagat Sarbajit Bishwakarma and Bhagat Laxmi Narayan Biswakarma.
1946-1947 (2003-2004)	Some *Dalits* made a union, *Nepal Samaj Sudhar Sangh* under the initiation of Jadu Veer Bishwakarma, Umalal Bishwakarma, and T. R. Bishwakarma. Sarbajit Bishwakarma started another organization, *Bishwa Sarbajan Sangh* in Baglung. His organization challenged the caste system by presenting evidences from the Hindu literature and claimed that there is no concept of touchability and non-touchability in the original Hindu literature. Damai caste people began to organize under a Tailor Union.
1950 (2007)	Chandra Lal Bishwakarma created an organization, *Nepal Harijan Sangh* in Bandipur, Tanahum district.
1951 (2008)	Jadu Veer Bishwakarma took leadership in the merging of all *Dalit's* organizations in Dharan such as Tailor Union, *Jat Tod Mandal* and. He named this new organization as *Nimna Samaj Sudhar Sangh*..
1952 (2009)	Saharsha Nath Kapali in Kathmandu created an organization, *Samaj Sudhar Sangh*. This organization through its movement of 1954 was able for the first time to gain entrance to *Dalits* into the Pashupati Nath (the national God of Nepal) Temple.
1955 (2012)	Mithai Devi Bishwakarma organized women under *Pariganit Nari Sangh*.
1956-1957 (2013-2014)	Saharsha Nath Kapali expanded his organization, *Samaj Sudhar Sangh* and renamed it *Nepal Rastriya Pariganit Parishid*. This newly formed organization made a hostel for *Dalit* students in Bijayashwari, Kathmandu, because *Dalits* were not allowed to go to a high caste person's house and rent it to live in.
1961 (2018)	Rastriya *Achhut Mukti Parishad*, an organization of *Dalit* s made an application to the King against non-touchability.

1967 (2024)	Two organizations emerged with the same name, *Nepal Rastriya Dalit Jana Bikas Parishad*. One was chaired by Saharsha Nath Kapali and the other by Rupa Lal Bishwakarma.
1977 (2034)	Saharsha Nath Kapali changed his organization's name and renamed it *Nepal Rastriya Jana Bikas Parishad*.
1978 (2035)	Shankar Bishwakarma organized *Dalits* under his organization, *Samaj Sudhar Sangh*.
1980 (2037)	An organization namely *Pachhaute Jati Sudhar Sangh* emerged to organize *Dalits*.
1981 (2038)	An organization, *Nepal Ati Pichhadiyeko Jana Bikas Parishad* emerged.
1982 (2039)	Siddhi Bahadur Khadgi organized people under his organization, *Nepal Rastriya Samaj Kalyan Sangh*.. One of the ministers from the *Dalit* caste, Hira Lal Bishwakarma was involved in this organization.
1983 (2040)	Bala Bahadur Khati organized *Dalits* under his organization, *Chhuwachhut Mukti Sangathan*.
1987 (2044)	Megh Bahadur Bishwakarma organized people under his organization *Jatiya Bibhed Unmulan Manch*.
1988 (2045)	Rajesh Bishwakarma organized *Dalits* under *Jatiya Samanta Samaj* which is a sister/brother organization of the Nepal Community Party (Masal). Golche Sarki (a parliamentarian for the upper house) made another organization for *Dalits*. Its name was *Utpidit Jatiya Utthan Manch*.
1989 (2046)	An organization appeared in Rupandehi district namely *Utpidit Jana Jatiya Mukti Morcha*. Rohit Hingmang made an organization of *Dalits* in Jhapa district. The organization was named *Rastriya Dalit Mukti Morcha*.
1990 (2047)	Megh Bahadur Bishwakarma revamped his organization *Jatiya Bibhed Unmulan Mancha*.
1991 (2048)	Nepali Congress Party organized *Dalits* as its sister/brother organizations, *Nepal Dalit Utthan Mancha* and *Bikhasonmukh Samaj Sangh*.

1992 (2049)	*Rastriya Dalit Jana Bikas Parishad* merged with *Jatiya Samata Samaj* and was renamed *Nepal Dalit Utthan Sangh*..
	A National organization of *Dalits* emerged as a sister/brother organization of Nepal Communist party (United Marxist-Leninist) by merging two organizations namely *Utpidit Jatiya Utthan Mancha* chaired by Golche Sarki and another organization *Nepal Rastriya Dalit Jana Bikas Parishad.* This new organization was renamed *Nepal Uttpidit Dalit Jatiya Mukti Samaj* at the initiation of Padma Lal Bishwakarma (a university teacher).
	Rastriya Prajatantra Party organized *Dalits* under its sister/brother origination, *Rastriya Prajatantrik Upekshit Utthan Manch.*
1993 (2050)	Number of NGOs such as *Pichhadiyeko Samudayama Adharit Program* in Gorkha, *Dalit Sewa Sangh* (under the initiative of Moti Lal Nepali), *Dalit Mahila Sangh* (under the initiative of Durga Sob), and *Dalit Samaj Kalyan Sangh* emerged for the service of *Dalits* by *Dalits* themselves.
	A number of caste organizations such as *Pariyar Samaj, Khatwe Samaj, Harijan Samaj,* and *Sarsaphai Majdur Samaj* emerged.

Note:- Number in parenthesis indicate Vikram Era, a Nepali date which is ahead of western calendar by 57 years, 8 month, and 14 days.

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Appendix VI Hinduism and Caste Theory

Table 15: Duty of a Person in the *Varnashram* System

Varna	Duty of a Person
Brahman	study, teach, perform *Yagnya*, enable people to perform *Yagnya*, give donations, take donations.
Kshatriya	provide security to people, give donations, perform *Yagnya*, study, and think for salvation or Nirvana.
Vaishya	raise cattle, give donations, perform *Yagnya*, study, do trade, give loans, and do agriculture (farming).
Sudra	serve people of other *Varnas* without being jealous of them.

Sources:-

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Table 16: Approaches to Sanskritization

According to Srinivas's (1977) empirical study in a village in Northern India the following are the approaches to *Sanskritization*.

*Dress like *Sanskritized* people,

*Follow dietary system of the *Sanskritized* people (local)

*Change individually (as Noniyas in India once wore *Janai* (sacred thread) and now these Noniyas are accepted as a high caste person)

*Do not eat beef and drink alcohol.

*Do not eat any kind of meat as do the*Vaishnavs* (people who worship the God Vishnu as their principal deity).

Table 17: Manu's Code of Conduct

Chapter 2 (168) a twice-born (Brahman, Kshyatria, Vaishya) who does not study the Veda but exerts himself doing something else quickly turns into a servant, even while he is alive, and his descendants too (Manusmriti, P.34).

Chapter 10 (10) (children) begotten by a priest with women from the two (lower) classes (Kshatriya and Vaishya) or by a commoner with women from the one (lower) class (*Sudra*)- all six are traditionally regarded as outcaste. (Manusmriti, P. 235)

Chapter 10 (12) (sons) of confused classes born from a servant in women of the commoner, royal, and priestly class are: the Unfit, the 'Carver' and the Fierce, the Untouchable, the worst of men (Manusmriti, P.236)

Note: Manu's law allows *Paninachalne Sudra* to live on the outskirts of the village, use earthen utensils, wear iron ornaments, keep dogs and donkeys, and clean washrooms and sewage. They were also supposed to be non-touchable, and were not to be looked at (Koirala, 1988: 282).

Table 18: Name of *Prashats* (Learned Persons) who made Caste Rule following Manu in one way or other

Angiras	Parashar
Apastamb	Sambart
Atri	Sankha
Brihaspati	Satatap
Daksha	Ushanas
Gautam	Vishnu
Harit	Vyasa
Katyanan	Yagnyavalka
Likhit	Yama

Table 19: Caste Groups and Caste Divisions of Nepal

Group	Caste Divison	Folk Reasons for the Division of Caste
Brahman	*Purbiya* Brahman	Those who immigrated from India taking the eastern route are considered as *Purbiya* Brahman.
	Kumai Brahman	Those who immigrated from India by taking the route of Kumaun, India are considered as *Kumai* Brahman.
		Both of these *Purbiya* and *Kuami* Brahman claim that they are pure because they could save their *Janai* (sacred thread) and *Tupi* (a small bunch of hair at the top of head) during the invasion of Muslims (11 - 14 century). By tradition, these two groups of Brahman can't dine together because of their superiority complex of being pure.
	Purbiya Jaishi Brahman	Offspring of a male *Purbiya* Brahman with a *Prubiya* widow Brahman woman is a *Purbiya Jaishi* Brahman.
	Kumai Jaishi Brahman	Offspring of a male*Kumai* Brahman with a *Kumai* widow Brahman woman is a *Kumai Jaishi* Brahman.
	Tarai Brahman	Brahman who lived in the Terai (southern plain) of Nepal and had no or a little relation with *Purbiya, Kumai* and *Jaishi* Brahman of the hill zones. So, both the *Purbiya* and *Kumai* Brahman do not traditionally dine with *Terai* Brahman.
Hindu Newari speaking community	*Charthare*	Joshi, Amatya, Malla, and Rajbanshi are considered as the highest group of persons.
	Chhathare	This group of the people are divided into *Ja- Chale-Jyu-Pin, Ja-Chale-**Ma**jyu- Pin, La-Chale -Jyu-Pin* and *La-Chale-**Ma**jyu-pin* (can eat rice together, can't eat rice together, can drink water. and can't drink water). *Charthare* to *Chharthare* are *Ja-Chale-Pin*, some group of *Chhathare* to *Charthare* are *Ja-Chale-**Ma**jyu-Pin* but *La-Chale -Jyu-Pin.* such as Sayami (Manandhar) to *Charthare*. But Duiya, Balami, Sangat, Dhobi, Kasai, Pode, Kushle, Kullu, Chyame, Harahur group of Newar had an "inferior" profession and hence they are both *Ja-Chale- **Ma**jyu- Pin* and *La-Chale- **Ma**jyu-pin* to *Charthare* Newar and some group of *Chhathare* Newar.

Buddhist Newari speaking community		In Buddhist Newar Bajracharya (Gubhaju) and Buddhacharya are considered as the highest group of people and hence *Ja-Chale-Jyu-Pin. Uray* (Tuladhar, Kansakar, Tamrakar, Sthapit) since the dispute of 1926 were *Ja-Chale* ***Majyu-Pin*** but *La-Chale Jyu-Pin*. The same is the case with Nakarmi, Napit, Sayami, Chitrakar, Maharjan, Dangol, Suwal, Singh. It means they were *Ja-Chale-* ***Majyu-Pin*** but *La-Chale-jyu-Pin* to*Uray*. But Duyia, Kushle are both *Ja-Chale-Majyu-Pin* and *Law-Chale-* ***Majyu-Pin*** to the priestly class Bajracharya and the next group *Uray*.
Gurung	*Charjate*	This group of people hold a key post in traditional society. For instance *Ghale* is a royal family, *Ghodane* a lord class, *Lama* a priestly class, and *Lamichhane* a village chief. Marriage rules require that they only marry with their class.
	Sorhajate	One of the reasons for the origin of *Sorhajate* Gurung is the breaking of the marriage rule by the *Charjate* Gurung. The offspring of such a marriage becomes *Sorhajate* Gurung.
		The children of the confused caste (unknown father) gets even lower status.
Tamang	*Barhatamang* and *Athartamang*	Inter-caste marriage and marriage between blood relation gives birth to a new caste, what a Tamang calls "*Sangri*." If a Tamang man marries with a Brahman or a Kshatriya women it is a *Chhiri* marriage. The offspring of such a marriage are called *Sangri* of the *Chhiri* marriage. Similarly if a Tamang man marries a Newar woman it is*Chuhi* marriage. The offspring of such a marriage are called *Sangri* of the *Chuhi* marriage. By the same token, if a Tamang man marries a woman from among his blood relations it is called *Jhari* marriage. The offspring of such a marriage are called *Sangri* of the *Jhari* marriage. All the *Sangries* are not acceptable to a traditional Tamang community. Among the *Sangris, Jhari Sangri* belongs to a low caste.
Dhimal	*Tagadhari* (sacred thread wearer)	If a *Tagadhari* Dhimal (high caste Dhimal) becomes *Matwali* (i. e. drinks alcohol) he/she gets inferior status in the society and becomes Donge, a Kshatriya of the Dhimal caste.

	Matawali	If a Dhimal, no matter whether he is a *Tagadhari* or *Matwali*, marries a woman of other caste (except Dhimal) his offspring are out-caste. Similarly if a Dhimal woman elopes with non-Dhimal man she herself and her children are not acceptable among traditional Dhimal caste people. If a Dhimal gives birth to a child with his or her blood relation the offsprings are out-caste and/or get low status among Dhimal caste people.
Kami*	Kami Kandaro	If a Kami man marries a Sarki woman, the offsprings are no longer called Kami but *Kandaro*. The *Kandaro* is considered a low caste Kami.

* Based on an observations during field work in Gorkha, Nepal.

Note:- The caste system is becoming relaxed these days especially among schooled people.

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Table 20: Sixteen *Sanskars* (Sacraments) leading to Nirvana

Before birth	*Garvadan* (just before conception), *Punshaban* (in 2 or 3 months for sex determination), *Simantonayan* (in 4-7 months for a healthy and intellectual fetus).
Childhood	*Jatakarman* (right after birth to welcome a child), *Namakaran* (in 5, 7, or 11 days for naming), *Dolarohan* (in 12, 16, or 22 days for putting a child into a cradle), *Niskraman* (in 3 or 4 months to take a child out of home), *Kanabhedan* (in 3, 6, 7, or 8 months to make a hole at the tip of ears), *Upabisan* (in 5 months for allowing a child to live on the floor), *Annaprasan* (in 6 or 8 months for weaning), *Chudakarman* (in 5 or 7 months for shaving hair).
Educational ritual	*Vidyarambha* (in 5 years to start formal education), *Upanayan* (in 8 years for Brahman male and 12 years for others as a requirement to study Veda or take *Gayatri Mantra*), *Vedarambha* (right after *Upanayan* to study Veda), and *Samavartan* (for men only and generally at the age of 25 or right after the completion of Veda to teach a child about domestic duties, paying homage to God and to ancestors).
Wedding	Right after the completion of *Samabartan sacrament.*

Note:- The purpose of *Sanskars* is the removal of hostile influences and the attraction of favorable influences that leads to salvation or *Nirvana.*

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Notes on the Origin and Value of the Four *Varnas*

Brahma thus formerly created the Brahmanic Prajapatis (secondary God considered as emanating from Brahma), penetrated by his own energy, and in splendor equaling the sun and fire. The lord then formed truth, righteousness, austere fervour, and the eternal Veda, virtuous practice, and purity for the attainment of heaven. He also formed the gods, demons and men, Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, as well as all other classes of beings. The color of the Brahmans was white; that of the Ksatriyas red; that of the Vaisyas yellow, and that of the Sudras black.

If the caste of the four classes is distinguished by their colour, then a confusion of all the castes is observable. Desire, anger, fear, cupidity, grief, apprehension, hunger, fatigue, prevail over us all: by what, then is caste discriminated? Sweat, urine, excrement, phlegm, bile, and blood are common to all; the bodies of all decay; by what, then, is caste discriminated? There are innumerable kinds of things moving and stationary; how is the class of these various objects to be determined?

There is no difference of castes: this world, having been at first created by Brahma entirely Brahmanic, became afterwards separated into castes in consequence of their actions. Those Brahmans, who were fond of sensual pleasure, fiery, irascible, prone to violence, who had forsaken their duty, and were redlimbed, fell into the condition of Ksatriyas. Those Brahmans who derived their livelihood from kine, who were yellow, who subsisted by agriculture, and who neglected to practice their duties, entered into the state of Vaisyas. Those Brahmans, who were addicted to mischief and falsehood, who were covetous, who lived by all kinds of work, who were black and had fallen from purity, sank into the condition of Sudras. Being separated from each other by these actions, the Brahmans became divided into different castes. Duty and the rites of sacrifice have not always been forbidden to any of them. Such are the four classes for whom the Brahmanic Sarasvati (the goddess of speech) was at first designed by Brahma, but who thought their cupidity fell into ignorance. Brahmans live agreeably to the prescriptions of the Veda; while they continually hold fast the Veda, and observances, and ceremonies, their austere fervour does not perish. And sacred science was created as the highest thing: they who are ignorant of it are not twice-born men. Of these there are various other classes in different places, who have lost all knowledge sacred and profane, and practise whatever observances they please. And different sorts of creatures with the purificatory rites of Brahmans, and discerning their own duties, are created by different Rsis (primitive seers) through their own austere fervour. This creation, sprung from the primal god, having its root in brahman,

undecaying, imperishable, is called the mind-born creation, and is devoted to the prescriptions of duty.

What is that in virtue of which a man is a Brahman, a Kshatriya, a Vaisya, or a Sudra; tell me, o most eloquent Rsi.

He who is pure, consecrated by the natal and other ceremonies, who has completely studied the Veda, lives in the practice of the six ceremonies, performs perfectly the rites of purification, who eats the remains of oblations, is attached to his religious teacher, is constant in religious observances, and devoted to truth,-- is called a Brahman. He in whom are seen truth, liberality, inoffensiveness, harmlessness, modesty, compassion, and austere fervour,----is declared to be a Brahman. He who practises the duty arising out of the kingly office, who is addicted to the study of the Veda, and who delights in giving and receiving,---is called a Kshatriya. He who readily occupies himself with cattle, who is devoted to agriculture and acquisition, who is pure, and is perfect in the study of the Veda,---is denominated a Vaisya. He who is habitually addicted to all kinds of food, performs all kinds of work, who is unclean, who has abandoned the Veda, and does not practise pure observances,---is traditionally called a Sudra. And this which I have stated is the mark of a Sudra, and it is not found in a Brahman: such a Sudra will remain a Sudra, while the Brahman who so acts will be no Brahman

Source:

Excerpt from J. Muir (1872: 139 - 142). *Original Sanskrit Texts* (Mahabharat). second ed., London: Trubner & Co., Cited in Renou, Louis (1962: 141 - 143). *Hinduism*. New York: George Braziller.

Table 21: Theory of Caste Formation

Traditional theory	This theory is based on the *Puru-Sukta's* (10-90-12) classification of the*Varnashram* system in Rigveda.
Political theory	Abbe Dubois thinks that some shrewd politicians made the caste rules by interpreting the classification of human beings under the *Puru-Sukta* (10-90-12).
Religious theory	The basis of caste division according to A.M. Hocart, a diffusion theorist, is a ritual which starts before birth and ends with on after death ceremony commonly known as *Sorha Sanskar* (sixteen sacraments). He further contends that rituals are the imitations of ancient fertility rites.
Geographical theory	In the view of Gilbert, local people developed castes and caste culture in order to avoid outsiders. Senart's Indo-European theory also supports this idea.
Theory of cultural integration	This theory contends that a high caste person married a low caste girl and gave birth to a new caste. Thus the hypergamous or hypogamous marriage is the cause of caste culture. (According to Manusmriti, Vaishya + previously married women give birth to a "Karan" and Karan with Vaishya produces a cobbler).
Economic theory	Nesfield thinks "function and function only is responsible for the origin of caste system," and the frequency of economic relation with different groups of people created a caste group. Actually, Brahmans started the caste system and afterwards other community people imitated them.
Evolutionary theory	Denzil Ibbetson believes that Caste culture evolved when people passed from a nomadic life to an agricultural life. The economic and marriage relation promoted it.
Racial theory	Herbert Risley thinks that the caste system originated right after the Aryans migrated into the Indian subcontinent. Initially they married with non-Aryans but once they no longer needed marital relations with non-Aryans, the Aryans developed castes and caste culture to show their superiority. The creation of a slave class is the by-product of such a relation.

Criminal theory	According to this theory, some people became low caste because of their crimes. For example Dom, Sansi, Nats, Harnis, Mianas were once a criminal caste in India, and were robber groups. To this day they are treated as *Paninachalne tatha chhunanahune* caste in Hindu society.
Multitrait theory	This theory claims that any one theory cannot be sufficient to describe the origin of caste culture. So, there should be more than one factor identified to explain the creation of caste.
Sanskritization theory	M. N. Srinivas found in his study in India that a Sanskritized person or a group of persons forms a new caste and begins to look down as the non-sanskritized groups or persons. Thus a new caste is born in the society.

Table 22: Marriage and Creation of New Castes

Marriage Type	Birth of a New Caste
Hypergamous Marriage	a) From a Brahman man
	*with a married Kshatriya woman = *Murdhabashikta*
	*with a Vaishya woman = *Ambastha*
	*with a *Sudra* woman = *Nishad* or *Parashar*
	b) From Kshatriya man
	*with a married Vaishya women = *Mahishya*
	*with a *Sudra* woman = *Ugra*
	c) From Vaishya man
	*with a married *Sudra* woman = *Karan*
Hypogamous Marriage	a) From a Brahman woman
	*with a Kshatriya man = *Suta*
	*with a Vaishya man = *Vaidehik*
	*with a *Sudra* man = *Chandal**
	b) From a Kshatriya woman
	*with a Vaishya man = *Maghad*
	*with a *Sudra* man = *Kshatar*
	c) From a Vaishya woman
	*with a *Sudra* man = *Aayogab*

* a *Chandal* is considered as outcast from all religions. Likewise a *Karan* man (son of a Vaishya man with a married *Sudra* woman) man gives birth to a *Charmakar* (cobbler) with a Vaishya woman. The *Charmakar* is considered as *Panina**chalne tatha Chhunana**hune* caste.

Source: Yagnya Valkyasmriti, a religious text

Table 23: *Varnashram* Theory in Hindu Religion

Traditional theory	the *Puru-Sukta* (10-90-12) and Manu's code of conduct are the basis of the origin of *Varnashram* theory in which Brahman are at the top, *Sudra* at the bottom and the rest Kshatriya and Vaishya come in between.
Theory of color	According to a Hindu sage, Bhrigu in a discussion with another sage, Bharadwaj, the color of a skin is the basis of *Varnashram*. Whites are Brahman, reds are Kshatriya, Yellowish are Vaishya, and Blacks are *Sudra*. In this case *Varna* means a color of a person.
Theory of functions and religion	The discussion between a Hindu sage namely Kaushik and a *Byadha* (hunter) brings a point that there were four fundamental necessities in a society which were for intellectuals, warriors, trade, and service. In order to meet the necessities, a *Varnashram* system was conceived.
Theory of traits	According to the discussion between Yudhistheer and *Jaldevata* (water God) in a Hindu text, three major traits of a person are the basis of *Varnashram* system. These traits are *Satwa* (truth), *Raja* (passion), and *Tama* (Anger). Those who has *Satwa* as a major trait belongs to Brahman group, *Raja* mixed with *Satwa* belongs to Kshatriya group, *Tama* mixed with *Raja* ensures a person as *Vaisha*, and only *Tama* trait holders belong to a *Sudra* group.
Theory of birth	A person because of his or her heredity belongs to a particular *Varnashram* and hence follows the Varnashram designed for him or her.

Table 24: Chronology of Caste Rules and Regulations in Nepal

Vedic Period (6000-4000 BC)	*No practice of touchability and non-touchability among Hindu groups though there was a *Sudra* caste in the later part of Vedic period (1000-500 BC) in *Aryavarta* (ancient Hindu's land).
Post Vedic Period	By following a religious text, *Ettiriya Brahman*, some of the *Sudras* were separated from other people and treated as non-touchable in *Aryavarta*.
Sutra Period i.e. period of aphorism or discourse (Later part of the post-Vedic period)	*High caste people used to watch *Sudra's* behavior in *Aryavarta*. *High emphasis was given to keep purity of blood through restricted marriage system and other purification rituals such as *Bratyastom* or *Ganayagnya* to pure non-Aryan stock and incorporate them into Aryan's *Varnashram* system.
Mahabharat period (2800- 950 BC)	*Lower caste *Sudras* were made hereditary in the Indo-Aryan tradition.
Kirat period (1600-700 BC)	*No evidence was found that there was a concept of touchability and non-touchability.
Buddha Period (563-483 BC)	**Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudras* were kept on the outskirts of the city and their presence was thought as *Apashakun* (a forecast for evil happening) in Indo-Aryan tradition. * By the end of this period a Hindu *Rhishi* (Seer) Bhrigu (200 BC - 200 CE) compiled a book called Manusmriti which later on became an authentic document to maintain the caste system.
Gopal and Mahishapal Period (before 200 BC)	*No evidence that there was a concept of touchability and non-touchability.
Lichhivi Period (250-878)	*Lower caste people could eat a feast with high caste people in the same kitchen. But they were supposed to serve the high caste people. *State did not allow the lower caste people to wear gold and silver ornaments such as *Kalli* and *Paujeb* (leg ornaments), and *Baju* (arm ornament). * The lower caste people were further divided on the basis of one's profession.

Malla Period (879-1768)	**Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudras* were kept on the outskirts of the city. They were also considered as *Asprishya* (non-touchable) in the Kathmandu valley. **Panichalne Sudras* were divided into *Masine* (can be enslaved or killed) and *Namasine* (can't be enslaved or killed). *The practice of not to touch *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudra* continued unquestioningly. *Especially in Jayasthiti Malla's period (at the end of 14th century) in Kathmandu *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudras* were restricted to wear some clothes. For example, Kasai in Hindu Newari speaking community was not allowed to wear full-sleeved *Labeda* (Nepali dress). *Pode* again in Newari speaking community was banned to put on cap, shoes and golden ornaments. They were not allowed to live in a *Jhiganti* (a tile type stuff) roofed house. *State did not allow professional mobility in the fear that it creates *Dharmasankar* (expert in no one's profession either inherited or acquired). *Only royal family and their priest's family were authorized to wear golden ornaments. **Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudra* such as Pode and Chyame in Newari speaking community were not allowed to put on shoes and to wear golden ornaments. These people were forced to eat *Jutho* (a left over of a person in his/her plate especially in *Bhojbhater* (feast ceremony) and do cleaning of latrine, sewage, and yard. *Brahmans by birth were considered as respectable. They got state authority to bless other caste people if somebody says *Namaskar* (hello) to them. *The state enforced the rule that no Brahmans be allowed to work as servant. If somebody keeps Brahman servant he/she was a subject to get penalty.
Ram Shah's Period (1606-1663)	*State outside Kathmandu valley (i.e. Gorkha) imposed a rule in which only a royal family and the courtiers, in the recommendation of the royal family, could wear golden ornaments from head to foot. But the Brahmans and Kshatriyas could not wear golden ornaments on their legs. *Brahman, Sanyasi, Bairage, and Bhat groups of people were subject to exile for offending social rules while others including *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudra* were subject to death for the same offense.

Prithvi Narayan Shah to Rana Period (1768-1845)	•One had to follow caste rules and regulations. If someone violated such rules he/she had to go for *Jatishabha* (assembly of his or her caste people) in order to get justice or settle disputes. In spite of all these rules, *Dalit* group such as Damai, Kami, and Sarki were employed as soldiers though it was not their caste profession. •Interestingly there was no *Jatishabha* for Brahman caste people. •In 1836 there was a legal system which manifested caste system. For instance:- - if Brahmans violate caste rule they go into exile - if kin violate caste rule they become out-caste and go into exile - if Kshatriya and Ghale (royal class of Gurung) violate caste rule they are subject to having their penis cut off. - if *Panichalne Sudra* violates the caste rule the state would do *Sarbashwa Haran* (take all of the property they owned) - if *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudra* such as Damai, Kami, and Sarki among hill people, Balami and Kushle in Newari speaking community, Dom, Chamar in southern plain violate the caste rule they are to be killed. - if *panichalne Sudra* such as Majhi, Danuwar, Chepang, Bhote, Sunuwar violate caste rule they were subject to be killed.
Rana Period (1846-1950)	•State gave a civil code in 1853 (1910 VS) that legalized caste system again. According to this code, the Nepali people were divided into five caste groups: (a) wearers of the secred thread (b) non-enslavable alcohol drinkers (c) enslavable alcohol drinkers (d) impure but touchable caste from whom water could be accepted, and (e) impure untouchable caste from whom water could not be accepted. Besides, the state had the power to out-caste them or upgrade the caste of a person or a group of persons under *Panjapatra* (an impression of a palm with yogurt and *Abeer* i.e. a red powder) or with an oral order. •*Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune* caste were divided into groups-*Chhoichhito Garnuparne* (one has to go for a ritual of sprinkling holy water if a high caste person touch *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune* caste person) and *Chhoichhito Garnunaparne* (one does not need to go for a ritual of sprinkling holy water if a high caste person touch *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune* caste person) •The state enforced dietary restrictions for different caste groups. If somebody violated the rule he/she was to be penalized. •One has to go for a ritual, *Patiya* as a repentance to reassure those who doubts one's purity or possible mistakes committed and *Godan* (*Go* means cow and *Dan* means donate) if he/she ate or touched something that was forbidden under caste rule. •If a *Paninachalne Sudra* deliberately adulterates high caste persons by touching or giving them restricted food to eat the *Sudra* was a subject to severe punishment. •*Panichalne Matwali* (who drinks alcohol) was not generally allowed to wear shoes. If someone wore shoes he or she had to take the shoes off when he or she meets a *Tagadhari* (a sacred thread wearer i.e. Brahman and Kshatriya) and say "*jadau Baraju*" (hello) to them. •It was a customary to ask an unfamiliar person "*Kasma Hau*?" (to which caste do you belong?).

Panchayat Period (1960-1990)	*In 1961 there was a law for the first time in Nepal that broke the tradition of punishing someone under caste rules.
Re-established Democratic Period (1990 to date)	*In 1991 (2048 VS) the parliament made an amendment to some of its articles (Nepal: Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 1990 or 2047 VS article 11(4) and made article 10 A) to punish people who discriminate against or hate *Paninachalne tatha Chhunanahune Sudra*.

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